00075742

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016

NEW

SKETCHES OF EVERY-DAY LIFE:

A DIARY.

TOGETHER WITH

STRIFE AND PEACE.

BY

FREDRIKA BREMER.

75742
ale

TRANSLATED

BY MARY HOWITT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. 1.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1844.

God
823
Bur, Adi
1
75742

PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

In presenting the present volumes of my series of Miss Bremer's works, circumstances compel me to some explanation, not only on my own account, but for the interests of translated literature An individual has proceeded not only to thrust himself into the very midst of my series, but has made an impudent attempt to injure my edition, as if I were publishing it in too costly a style.

It is a fact which testifies most strikingly to the honourable feeling, both of the press and amongst the publishers generally, that to my knowledge not only many of the most respectable journals have refused to yield to the pressing entreaties made to them to sanction and introduce these dishonourable interlopers, but publishers who are importers of American works have declined to sell these cheap American pennyworths when sent to them. *There has yet been found but one man* out of the vast mass of English publishers who has been mean enough to thrust himself into the series which I had introduced at my own risk, so much to the satisfaction of the Public; and what is more, *there has not been found a single literary person, either in this country or America, who would put his or her name to another translation.*

But THIS ONE MAN has, forsooth, done it *for public good!* My edition was not cheap enough for the people, and the works were too good to be withheld from the people. For *public good,* therefore, he pokes himself in just before me on the literary causeway. Now there never yet was an especially mean transaction

perpetrated which was not immediately coloured over with the convenient ochre of public good. But what public good?

If the man really wanted nothing more than that a popular edition should appear, he had only to inquire of me, as any honest, disinterested man would have done, and he would have found that in due course this would appear, with all the advantages of deliberate correction and improvement. But, in his zeal for public good, he put no such query to me—for the very sufficient reason that that was not his intention. His object was a *public good* turned carefully into his *private pocket.* Had he wanted public good solely, there was no need of his treading on my toes to extract it; the world is wide, and there is a world of excellent matter in foreign literature, if he had the sense or the information to enable him to collect it. I have no objection to cheap editions of any good translations that he or any other man may undertake on his own original sagacity; but what right has he to make me a jackal to *such a city lion?* I am as great an advocate for cheap translations as he can be; but I say, in heaven's name let not translators and publishers become a crowd of cannibals, to devour each other. I do not interfere with the speculations of Smith, or Clarke, or Tomkins—let them at least be good enough to let alone mine.

If a man will, however, advocate the *public good,* let him at least dare and risk something for it. But this man does not risk a doit for it. He does not move till he sees that I have tested the risk, and *created a public for the work;* when he steps in, passes over the volumes on which I am at the moment engaged, and pounces on the next before me. This marks the Prowler and the Literary Body-snatcher.*

* In a preface to one of his surreptitious publications, this person puts on a face of the most innocent simplicity, and assures us that he never yet meddled with anybody's copyrights. Certainly not, for the best of reasons—he knows the law would then lay hold of him. There *are* persons—very sensible persons in their way—who never take what the

Let it be clearly understood then, that this question is not at all one of a cheap edition; that is a matter of course: but it is a question whether it be fair and honourable for a man who ventures nothing himself, who learns and acquires nothing himself, to lurk as a Literary Buccaneer in the steps of authors of established reputation, till they have opened to his greedy eyes a safe means of profiting by their taste, and tact, and experience.

It is one thing to spend years in acquiring foreign languages; to spend other years in visiting foreign countries, and poring through the vast mass of foreign productions, in order to discover and pick out what is really worthy of being introduced to your countrymen,—one thing, when you have done all this, at a most serious cost of time, labour, and money; have then taken all other risks, and in fact *created a public;*—and *another thing*, for a man who has done nothing of all this, to avail himself of the fruits of your labours, and of the public favour you have raised.

Such a system, I am sure, when once exposed, will, by all honourable minds, be stamped as most unfair, and as most prejudicial to the interests of good literature. The case is not my own merely; it is that of Mrs. Austin, and of almost every translator of note; and the consequence, if it go on, will be to deter all authors of talent and repute from the risk, labour, and research necessary for the selection of what is good, and from giving the

law would make them smart for; never carry off what is too heavy, or touch what is too hot. But the catalogue of this person's Buccaneer plunder, published by himself, shews that he seizes on any author's works the first moment that the copyright *technically* expires. There are various works of Sir Walter Scott, Crabbe, Keats, Mrs. Hemans, etc., which he has pounced on without the smallest regard or delicacy towards the authors or their families. They who will seize copyrights *immediately after* the law connives at it, would as certainly, but for the terror of the law, seize them *before*. Thank heaven, that authors have the protection of a Copyright Act, or they would certainly be *brained* by the Buccaneers between their own houses and the printers, and their MSS. carried off.

time necessary for the production of excellence; the work of translation will fall into the hands of anonymous mediocrity, and become a disgrace to our literature.

For, whatever may be said respecting cheap editions, every one who knows anything of the subject will agree with me, that no good Author will be found, who can possibly remunerate himself on such works. In that form they cannot be at first introduced; for they will not be, at first, bought to a paying extent. A Library edition is the first and natural step. It is in this form that a moderate edition alone can be put out to test the public taste; a cheap edition *must of necessity* be a larger one, and it must involve a great loss if it do not succeed. But in a library form, it will be at once purchased by the librarians, and the wealthy to a certain extent; and, if good, will acquire that speedy *eclât* which will enable the publishers, as the most eminent are now doing, to bring out popular editions, *at once cheap and perfect.*

These people therefore, who, like the Harpies of old, pounce down on the viands which you set on the public table, *so far from being the public benefactors which they pretend, are actually the destroyers of the natural and true benefaction—the issue, in due course, of authentic and perfected editions.* I will presently make this very case an evidence of this.

I myself have not, as this individual would insinuate, published with a view to large profits. I commenced the undertaking, in the face of the advice and warnings of the most experienced publishers, with the probability of a considerable loss. But I determined at any cost, if possible, to introduce these works, and I glory that it has been *a woman* who has done this. My editions have been moderate, so as to allow me every opportunity of revision by comparison of the latest editions of the originals; and any one who is capable of comparing my new editions with the originals, will see how carefully they have been brought up, *verbatim et literatim*, to them. So much so that the

amiable authoress herself, while highly dissatisfied with the German translations, has expressed her warmest sense of "den samvets grannhet och den nit hvarmed ni går tillväga vid Er öfversättning"—"the conscientious accuracy and zeal with which you execute your translations."

And what have we got instead, from this advocate of public good? *An importation and reprint of anonymous abridgments of these works, got up and curtailed, both in style and quantity, into the limits suited to the American cheap market, and abounding with Americanisms, which all well-educated persons will be careful not to introduce into their families;* as "she is a going"—"vanity *belittles* a woman"—"sleighs, and sleds, and sleighing," for sledges and sledging—"surroundings," for environs; with such Yankee slang as "he got mad in love, and she gave him the bag," etc.; as any one may convince himself who looks into these eye-destroying small prints.

That it is not a mere assertion that these are, in fact, abridgments, or at least miserably garbled copies, I will speedily shew; but, in the first place, it may be as well to give the history of these American translations. Every one who has paid the least attention to what has been going on in America, knows that the American publishers have been tearing each other limb from limb in the matter of reprints of English new works. Works which cost a guinea each here, were reprinted there immediately for a shilling each. Such became the fury of American competition, that not one such reprint of such a work appeared, but half a dozen simultaneously. The madness was soon so great that these people were seen advertising, one against another, *sixpenny works*, of which the mere paper was worth twice the money. To such a pitch was this carried, that anything like native literature was quashed. No native author could obtain a copyright remuneration. There was no profit to give it. *Our* authors supplied their market, and *their* authors were almost universally compelled to come to this country to obtain anything

for a new work; and all sensible men lamented, and still lament, that under such circumstances no national American literature can possibly arise. What the result of this competition-mania has been, many a publishing-house could shew in frightful accounts on the wrong sides of their ledgers. The story, however, is plainly told every day in their newspapers. The New York correspondent of the *Boston Evening Gazette*, a family newspaper of July 8, 1843, says:—"As to the cheap republications—the system is dead. A few houses, the Harpers, Winchesters, etc., print occasionally; but from the best information I can get, *nothing is gained by it*, and, probably, publications will go back to a medium price and a shape suitable for preservation —'a consummation devoutly to be wished.'"

Such is the upshot of the American cheap republication mania; but the mischief did not stop here. They began to pour these wretched and maimed reprints of our works in shoals back upon us at home. Our literature, too, was threatened with annihilation from this source. Fortunately we got an Act putting a stop to the entrance of these pale and wasted ghosts of our own creation from the world beyond the Atlantic; but translators are still exposed to the whole evil. Accordingly, no sooner did my translations of Miss Bremer's works begin to attract attention, then these ravenous American publishers began furiously to translate those at which I had not arrived, so as to get the start of their brother publishers, who reprinted mine. What sort of translations these were likely to be may be imagined. I had spent two years in the preparation for, and in the execution of, mine—these were thrown out in a few weeks. They professed to *translate from the Swedish*, and to replace all the passages omitted in the German translations.

These are the translations which our London Buccaneer has avowedly reprinted. What kind of an article he had got hold of he knew no more than the man in the moon, for he had no means of knowing, being totally ignorant of both Swedish and German.

But it was enough for him that there was a translation of *some sort* that he could rush into the field with, and a Yankee puff ready written to his hands, which he took wholly for his advertisement. The trick succeeded to a certain extent; for who was, at once, to expose it? So little have the language and the literature of the North of Europe been cared for by us, that I much question whether there be three persons connected with the London Press who are masters of the Swedish and Norwegian languages, both of which are necessary for the translation of these works. Accordingly, one or two of our respectable journals were unwarily caught in the snare, and boldly declared in noticing these reprints that they were excellent and equal to mine.

The simple fact, however is, and I am now in a condition to demonstrate it most satisfactorily, as I now print my translation of one of the stories which has been reprinted from the American translation—"Strife and Peace;" and it will be in the power of any one to test the matter, and see that these American translations ARE NOT AT ALL TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH, *but from the German; and so far*, as I will directly shew, *from replacing the numerous important passages omitted by the carelessness of the German translator, the Americans purposely cut away a vast number more, in order to reduce the work to as cheap a quantity* as possible.

That they are translated from the German, and not from the Swedish, every page will prove, *for the blunders and misconceptions of the German translator*, often very ludicrous, *are most regularly and carefully copied.* As the Chinese, when they receive an order from England to make some pieces of china, to complete again a broken set, always make an exact *fac simile* of the china sent, copying most precisely every flaw and defect, as well as the regular pattern; so has the American translator done here. As I have already stated, Miss Bremer complains heavily of these ludicrous errors of the German, which have thus been so completely transferred into the cheap English reprints. It would

exceed the limits of a preface to enumerate these. I will, however, give a very good specimen of them, and pass on to the still more serious matter of the omissions.

Near the end of "Strife and Peace," Mrs. Astrid, writing to her friend the Bishop, tells him that all her troubles are now over, and bids him come and rejoice with her. "Kom," she says, "och mottag min ånger öfver min klenmodighet, öfver min knot; kom, och hjelp mig att tacka!" "Come and receive my contrition for my pusillanimity, for my repining, come and help me to express my thanks!" This the German translates—"Kommen sie, und helfen sie mir denken!" Which the American translator, with Chinese fidelity, copies, and the Englishman as faithfully reprints—"*Come and help me to think!*"

As to the *completeness* of the translation, let us take at random a dip into "Strife and Peace." The chapter on Nordland, a chapter which, independently of the letter it contains, consists only of six paragraphs, has in Smith's edition, two out of those six omitted, besides a portion of the letter itself. These two passages are extremely descriptive of life and scenery, and make no less than fourteen lines of the original. At page 16 occurs another omission, descriptive of the domestic life; page 27 another of no less than nine lines, descriptive of the wild Halling dance. This is immediately followed by another, descriptive of the Halling costume. On the next column of the same page is another, descriptive of the music of the Hardanger viol. All these break up dreadfully the beautiful and wild picture of Norwegian life and festivity.

Take again the mountain journey to Bergen, page 32 of Smith's reprint, there are two omissions; page 33, *three* others. One of these alone consists of nine lines of the original, and relates to most curious and characteristic matter, to the waymarks of stones piled in that wild and desolate region, where the actors of the story fall into the utmost peril and perplexity. Pages 34 and 35 occur two or three more, and so on through the book.

What is remarkable in *this* volume is, that the *German translation*, unlike those of the other volumes, *is perfect*. I believe there is not a line of the original omitted; while here in this reprint from the American, declared to be *from the Swedish, with the German omissions replaced*, there abound omissions of the most material character.

What is still more remarkable is, that this work, "Strife and Peace," is unquestionably in point of style the most eloquent and beautiful composition of all Miss Bremer's writings, which renders it tenfold more unpardonable thus to have mangled it.

Another curious fact is, that all the mottoes, and indeed, the greater part of the poetry, of this volume are from Norwegian poets; given purposely by Miss Bremer, as the scene is laid in that country. Much of this poetry is left out: and the rest, not being understood, retains, in some instances, only a dim shadow of the meaning of the original; in others, has no connexion with it whatever. We have verses with a sonorous, Mrs. Hemans-like flourish of trumpets, but which as translations of what they pretend to represent, might just as well be taken out of any book that the translator had at hand.

For instance, these eight lines of the poet Munch have, I may say, a rude simplicity about them, and certainly nothing in the world about "flowers of love and life; or which shed their fragrance on our bier or clay-cold sod."

Hvad er det saa meer?
Entgang den seer
Dog en venlig Strimmel
Af Hjemmets lysende Himmel,
Engang den leur
Under Templets tonende Buer—
En slig Sekund
Vëier vel op imod Dødens Blund.

Yet these have their sounding substitute of half the number of lines:—

The flowers of love and hope we gather here,
Shall yet bloom for us in the heaven of God;
They shed not their last fragrance o'er our bier,
They lie not withered on the cold grave sod.

These twelve lines of Wergeland—(as given by me):

The first time, yes the first time flings
A glory even on trivial things;
It passes soon, a moment's falling,
Then it is also past recalling.

The grass itself has such a prime:
Man prizes most spring's flowery time,
When first the verdure decks earth's bosom,
And the heart-leaf foretels the blossom.

Thus God lets all, however low,
In 'the first time' a triumph know;
Even in the hour when death impendeth,
And life itself to heaven ascendeth.

Are by the hydraulic press of Smith *and Co.* squeezed into these four:

Fairer the first faint blushes of the dawn
Than the full splendour of the noon-day light;
Dearer the first pale flowers in early spring-time born,
Then all that summer boasts of fair and bright.

Of six extracts from the bard of Rein, in "the Evening Hour in the Sitting Room," three, that is, one-half of them, are suppressed. So also eleven fine lines of Foss, opening this chapter, and three lines from Velhaven, which occur in the middle of the chapter, are transplanted and substituted for them. A line of Tegnér in this chapter is also omitted. Eight striking lines of a Norwegian song, introduced as a motto to the chapter on the Halling-dance, and illustrative of this festive occasion, are totally omitted. So also the stanza introductory to the chapter on Christmas, from Bjerregaard.

Kommer J sorglöse, vingede Smaae!
Kornbaard for eder ved Laderne staae.
Juul er i vente;
Da skal J hente
Föde fra guldgule, brödsvangre Straae.

But the number of these omissions is almost *numberless:* perhaps the most singular of all is that of the very passage in which the Strife ceases, and the Peace is concluded, by the side of the well, consisting of eleven lines.

These attempts to palm off the work, spite of all this mutilation, as from the Swedish, by the introduction of Fru instead of Mrs.; Oefwerstinna, meant for Öfverstinna, that is simply, a colonel's lady; Herre for Herr, or plain Mr., etc., are quite ludicrous. At the same time almost every original word or proper name introduced, are erroneously introduced. The translator, not aware that the diæresis or other peculiar mark over the vowels in Swedish, does not merely change the sound, but converts the word into a totally different sense—gives us these sometimes in the English with the oddest effect. Thus we have Skal, and Skäl indiscriminately, while he all the while means Skål—the three have really the different meanings of, a husk or peal, a motive, and a health! The same obtuseness shews itself in marking the nice traits of humour and character for which Miss Bremer is so eminent. We are told that Susanna had two different natures, which are designated by contractions of her two Christian names—Barbara Susanna, into *Barbra* and *Sanna.* But this distinction is too delicate for the translator, and he regularly prints them Barbara and Sanna, whereby the indication is totally lost. But to go through all the wilful omissions, and the ignorant misconceptions and disfigurements, would be too much.

These remarks apply not only to this but to the whole series. In them too is exactly copied the German translation, even to the very errors of the press. In the H—— Family, the German translator has unwarrantably altered almost every proper name

both of place and person. Even the name of the narrator of the story—Miss Christina Beata Hvardagslag—is converted into *Charlotte* Beata *Everyday*; Lönquist, into Lonberg; Bergström, into Britmund; Roslagen, into Koslapean; Berndts, into Berends, etc. etc. All these are carefully copied into the American translation. The notes of the authoress in the original are omitted, and notes on totally different subjects, by the German translator, are also given. The German has taken the liberty to foist in whole sentences of sentimental prosing, which the American has also given. In short, he has never seen the original, and his translation is an impudent and worthless imposition.

So much for translation from the Swedish, and for the restoration of omitted passages.

Is this then the manner in which we should wish to see the best productions of foreign writers introduced into our language? Is it such works as these that any of our respectable reviewers will be found introducing to notice, and recommending as on a par with those which have been the result of long and careful study, and of the most anxious care and labour to produce perfect both in sense and substance?

Whoever has come in contact with foreign authors of eminence knows that it is a subject of sore complaint that their works are translated into our language generally in a most slovenly state, and obtain circulation by the side of those of the most faithful and able character. Whoever gives circulation to such inferior or defective translation does a fourfold injury—to the author, the honest translator, the public, and the literary character of the country.

Since writing thus far, I have seen that the introducer of these American translations has announced one of Miss Bremer's new work "A Diary." This certainly cannot be from the Swedish, which is scarcely yet out, and of which I know that sheets have been transmitted by the authoress only to myself. It must, therefore, be from the German translation—which is by far the most defective German translation that has yet appeared of any of Miss Bremer's works, having omissions of several pages at once.

I see too that another of the Buccaneers has taken the field, with announcements of translations from Miss Bremer; and who? —No other than the very man who seized bodily on the Rev. Mr. Muzzey's "American Maiden," placed another name on the title-page, dubbed it "The English Maiden," and sent it forth as an original work! stating gravely in his preface, that in this, his work, "he had *been very careful to inculcate the morality of the Bible!!*" Mr. Muzzey, amazed to see extracts from his own work in American papers, under another title and another man's name, hastened over to London, confronted the impudent freebooter, and issued an English edition of his own work.

In such hands as these, what beautiful translations of Miss Bremer may we not expect! The Rev. Sydney Smith has ably trounced the Americans for *their* dishonesty; we entreat him to hold the balance even, and chastise this dishonesty towards Americans on the part of our countrymen? Swindling is the same thing on one side of the water as on the other, and nothing more disgraceful to national character can be done on the other side of the Atlantic.

But at these men I am not surprised; they are only labouring in their ordinary vocation. The real cause of surprise is that any journal can be found, holding a respectable rank, which will sanction and encourage them. Their miserable activity is the natural result of such patronage. It is for the English Press, which is the guardian of the honour and integrity of our literature, to protect us from this state of things. It is for

it to say whether it shall be possible for translations of excellent works from abroad to be made with the necessary care and leisure; or whether the moment a translator of known tact and reputation announces a fresh work, he or she shall be torn to pieces by a pack of hungry wolves. It is for it to see that when we have a cheap translation, it shall *at least* be sound and honest.

I repeat my testimony to the honourable feeling already shewn by the great body of the press in the present instance, and my confidence that all that is so obviously necessary will be affected by it. I have now stated what it was my duty to state in support of the purity and integrity of the translations of these works. In my own case I have spared no pains to ensure this; and I have had always at hand the ever-ready assistance of Mr. Howitt—an enthusiastic admirer of these Northern tongues. My plan has been when my translation was complete to read it aloud to him, while he held the original in his hand, so that no word or no misconception might escape; and I confidently, therefore, present my edition to the public as faithful and complete.

The *Examiner*, in a flattering notice of one of my translations, regretted that I had not given some more account of Miss Bremer herself, adding that she was in reduced circumstances. I am happy to say that wherever that information was obtained, it was totally unfounded. Miss Bremer is not only of a substantial family, but connected with the nobility of the country. It is not my intention to give a line respecting Miss Bremer more than is agreeable to herself; but in her kind interest in my translation she has voluntarily offered to write me a Sketch of her Literary Life, which, with whatever is proper to be added, will appear in my next issue—the concluding one of Miss Bremer's published stories.

Miss Bremer lately addressed to me these words:—"Sweden is a poor but noble country; England is a rich and noble one; but in spirit they are sisters, and should know each other as such. Let us, dear Mrs. Howitt, contribute to that end!"

I am convinced that England and Sweden, including the fine kingdom of Norway, may become in both intellectual and commercial relations far better known to each other to the greatest mutual advantage. No one could have opened up more successfully the intellectual intercourse than Miss Bremer; and I regard it as one of the happiest and most honourable events of my life—of which nothing can deprive me—that I have introduced her beautiful and ennobling writings, not only to these islands, but to the whole vast English family. I have sent them expressly to Australia; and in America, in India, at the Cape, as well as in Australasia, Miss Bremer is now a household word—nay, more—a household possession and blessing.

MARY HOWITT.

The Grange, Upper Clapton,
Dec. 18th, 1843.

A DIARY.

Stockholm, 1st November, 18— .

IN THE MORNING HOUR.

"ANOTHER day, another revolution of light and shade. Enjoy thy existence, sayest thou, holy dawn of morning, animating glance of love, beam of God! Thou wakest me once more from my darkness, givest me a day, a new existence, a whole life. Thou lookest upon me in this light and sayest, follow the moments! They scatter in their flight, light and flowers; they conceal themselves in clouds, but only to shine forth again all the lovelier; follow them, and let not the shade find thee before thou hast begun to live!"

Thus thought I with a great, home-departed spirit, as in the dawn of morning I awoke and saw the beam of daylight penetrating into my chamber, and

involuntarily stretched forth my arms to meet it. It was neither bright nor cheerful; it was the misty beam of a November day, but still light from the light which brightened my life's-day, and I greeted it with love.

May the light of my life's-day, like that of the morning, be—an ascending one! whether its beam shine through mist or through clear air is all one! if only the day increase, if only life brighten.

After an absence of ten years I visit anew the home of my childhood; whether for a longer or a shorter time circumstances will determine. Independent in fortune and position in life, I can now, after a captivity of many years, enjoy freedom, and at thirty years of age follow merely my own will.

I arrived here last evening, a few days earlier than I was expected, and thus could not by any possibility flatter myself that on my account the house of my stepmother was so splendidly lighted up as I found it on stopping before it. Ah, no! On the contrary, it was terribly difficult to find anybody who would trouble themselves in the least about me and my things.

At length I stumbled upon a maid-servant, whose kind countenance and manner immediately pleased me, and who, as soon as she perceived who I was, busied herself actively about me and mine. "Ah!" exclaimed she, as she led me up a winding staircase covered with carpeting which led to my room, "how

vexatious it is! Her Grace gives to-day a little ball to celebrate Miss Selma's birthday, and now they have taken off their cloaks in your room, Miss; how it looks!—But see! they did not expect you earlier than next week, and therefore nothing is in order."

"It does not signify!" said I, as with some consternation I looked round the room which my step-mother in her letter had praised as an 'excellent chamber,' and which was now filled with gentlemen's and ladies' cloaks, with fur boots and over-shoes. The music of one of Strauss's intoxicating waltzes came from below, producing an effect half-animating, half-depressing; and I thought, if I up here, sit myself down quietly among these empty human habiliments and listen to this music, and think, "here sit I, a forlorn stranger in the country, whilst they without are making merry with dancing, then—I shall become melancholy, and shall begin to write an appendix to Solomon's sermon, 'All is vanity!' But if I too go down among those joyful people, and entertain myself with looking at them, and whilst they whirl about in the gallopade and the waltz, make my"——

A dim idea unfolded itself suddenly in my head, like the butterfly from the chrysalis. I took hold of Karin—such was the name of my obliging maiden—and prayed her to inform nobody in the house of my arrival, but on the contrary, to assist me in putting on my black silk dress and other things, to make a hasty toilet. I wished to sneak into the company

unannounced and unknown. Karin understood my idea, thought it merry, and helped me quickly and efficiently; so that in half an hour I could shew myself with honour in the saloon, and hoped to remain unobserved by a part of the '*foule*' which, as I knew of old, was very important in the soirées of my stepmother. And to tell the truth, I was not altogether dissatisfied to be able to look about me a little, and, as it were, to prepare myself for acquaintance with relatives whom I had now not seen for so many years.

As I entered the dancing-room a gallopade was being danced. I stole along by the wall, and soon fortunately found a place in a corner. The music, the noise, and the strong blaze of light, almost bewildered my head. When I had a little recovered my senses, I spied about curiously after the countenances of my connexions; above all, my eye sought for my young sister Selma, although almost without hope of being able to recognise in the young girl of twenty, the tender, delicate child which I had not seen for ten years.

"But the sole daughter of the house," thought I, "the heroine of the day, must still be easy to discover among the others: she must certainly precede every one in the dance, and must be put forward and honoured before all others!" and I sought inquiringly among the couples who were floating round in the gallopade. The dance seemed to me enchanting.

'*Ah, les reines du bal!*' said now an elderly gentleman of an animated, and at the same time somewhat faded exterior and relaxed features, who stood near me; and I saw a young officer of dragoons dancing onward with two young ladies who riveted my whole attention, so beautiful and brilliant were they. I considered it a settled thing that one of these must be my sister Selma; but which of them? They had a remarkably great sisterly resemblance, and yet on near observation it was a peculiar manner which made them unlike. The lively, refined, captivating grace which distinguished the one who was dressed in white gauze and blond, was wanting in the other, who was dressed in bright rose-coloured crape, and whose growth was somewhat larger, yet who mean time was unquestionably the handsomer. Her dancing was characterised by that joyously-bounding life, which is said to constitute the spirit of Fanny Elsler's dancing, whilst the dancing of the other—the white one—had more of the noble pure grace which I myself have admired in Maria Taglioni. Either might be Selma. The more I regarded the white one, the more I wished that she might be my sister.

But is it, indeed, possible, that the somewhat self-willed doll, 'little me,' as Selma called herself in her childish years, should have changed itself into this sylph-like being, whose countenance beamed with soul and innocent joy?

The other had more of the proud SELF, which looked forth in the child Selma; perhaps she might be my sister Selma? Should I be able to love her much?

Whilst this contest between the red and white rose went on in my mind, and I purposely demanded no explanation from my neighbour, but would await the answer from chance, I heard the gentleman who had exclaimed, '*les reines du bal*,' congratulated by another upon being '*a rich old bachelor*.'

"The life of a rich old bachelor," said he with a sigh, which awakened in me the thought that he found himself burdened with as many wives and children as Rochus Pumpernickel—"the life of a rich old bachelor is indeed a continual"——

"The life of a rich old bachelor," said the first speaker also with a sigh, "is a splendid breakfast, a tolerably flat dinner, and a most miserable supper!"

Whilst I listened to the communication of the two gentlemen, and observed '*les reines du bal*,' I remarked that a man between thirty and forty, in naval uniform, of a frank and strong exterior, with a pair of serious, honest eyes—observed me. This gave me pleasure—I do not know why. I also remarked that the son of Neptune steered ever nearer and nearer to me, and—unexpectedly seated himself by my side. I cannot at this moment rightly comprehend how we came into discourse, and still

less how I came to confide to him my observations on the two stars of the ball, and last of all, how I could feel so communicative and well acquainted with a person entirely strange to me. The person smiled at my confidential communications, and inquired if I wished for any explanations from him? I replied that this evening I had set out on a voyage of discovery, and had taken Chance for my helmsman, and would have him to govern the voyage. My new acquaintance warned me of the danger of giving myself up to such a helmsman, and sought with delicacy to dive into the intention of my undertaking. I answered evasively; the conversation was jesting, and it seemed to me as if a great ship of war was amusing itself by chasing a little brig, which nevertheless succeeded, by rapidly tacking about, perpetually to escape it. In the mean time we came, quite unexpectedly, into very deep water, namely, into the innermost of the soul and of life, and we soon were contending about that which constitutes the highest weal or woe of human life. We had on this subject entirely different views, because, whilst I, in the calmness of temper and clearness of thought, sought for the haven of felicity, the son of Neptune found it merely in the life and strength of feeling. I asserted that in this way he never would come into the haven, but would always find himself on the outside of it, in the open stormy sea. He had nothing to say against this. It was exactly upon the

open stormy sea that he had found happiness. I declared myself opposed to the disquiet of a Viking life; he against a life of quiet and ease. I spoke of the danger of shipwrecks under the guidance of the feelings, and remembered Odin's words in Havamal, "Insecure is that which one possesses in the breast of another." The seaman betook himself to Christianity, and thought with the Apostle, that without love all things in the world were sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. I bowed myself before human love: this was precisely my proposition. But in regard to private relationships, I found it to be in the highest degree necessary to be able to sing at all times,

"I care for nobody, nobody,
And nobody cares for me!"

The seaman laughed, but shook his head and said, "You would not be able to sing so, and could not sing so, if you had had the happiness—to have children."

"Perhaps not," replied I, in an indifferent tone; pleased in myself to find that my new acquaintance was, as I had already suspected, a married man, and the father of a family.

We were here interrupted by the ending of the gallopade and the dancing ladies seeking for resting places, on which my neighbour stood up. The view through the dancing-room was now freer, and permitted one through the open doors to look into the

saloon, where turbaned 'gracious ladies' occupied the divans, and several gentlemen with stars and ribbons moved about them.

"Ah, there she is!" thought I, with sudden emotion, as a lady of noble figure and noble bearing came in sight, whilst in conversation with an elderly gentleman, she slowly approached the dancing-room.

Yes, that was she; still the same as ever in appearance, grave, beautiful, and tasteful in dress. I recognised the strings of real pearls, with jewelled clasps, which surrounded her neck and her lovely arms, which I would so willingly have kissed in my childhood; I recognised the beautiful countenance, and the carriage, so imposing, and yet so full of grace. She was still the same as, twenty years ago, she had stood a half-divinity before my eyes in the magnificent saloons of the capital; when she, as wife of 'the District Governor,' did the honours, with the looks of a queen; yes, she was still the same as I then had seen her, and nothing more distinguished have I seen since then,—although I have looked well about me in the world,—and probably never shall, and yet . . . . It was my stepmother! My heart beat not lightly, as I saw her slowly approach the side where I sate, and anticipated the moment of recognition; it came.

The glance of my stepmother fell on me; she started, and looked again observantly; I stood up; she hastened towards me, and we soon embraced

each other; not without mutual embarrassment, which the surprise, and mutual excuses,—from me, on account of my arrival; from her, on the condition of my chamber,—helped to conceal. My stepmother now called 'Selma! Selma!' and the white sylph floated towards us, and I clasped my young sister in my arms, glad that she was 'the white rose,' and delighted to see such a kindly joy beam from her dear blue eyes, as blushing, she heartily bade me welcome.

At this moment my glance involuntarily met that of my former neighbour, who from some little distance observed us, with a gentle, half-melancholy smile. After this, my stepmother called 'Flora!' and beckoned; but Flora, occupied in lively discourse with some gentlemen, did not immediately hear. Selma hastened to her, took her by the arm, and returned with her to me. I saw 'the red rose,' the other queen of the ball, before me. Selma whispered, "Sophia! thy and my cousin, Flora!"

My cousin Flora Delphin, whom I now saw for the first time, greeted me courteously; and after a short and indifferent conversation, she turned again to her gentlemen.

"For this evening no more acquaintance, my sweet Selma," I now besought. "I know that I here must have several, to me, yet unknown relations; but I would rather defer making their acquaintance till another time.

"All the better!" answered she; "then can I yet a while alone belong to you. I shall not dance this dance—I must chat with you." And now, as a quadrille was played, Selma's partner approached; she excused herself to him, and introduced him to a young lady who was sitting, and whom he led to the dance. On this, she seated herself near me, asked with warm interest after things which concerned me, and reminded me, with a voice full of tender emotion, how I had been so good to her in her childhood, told her tales, had brought about pastimes, and little merry-makings and such like, in order to please her.

"This time, Selma," interrupted I, "you must tell me tales; but, of course, only true ones; because I am totally unacquainted with the world which surrounds me here, and would willingly be conducted into it; or much rather, without any trouble on my part, have it brought to me."

"Ah! you have addressed yourself exactly to the right person," said Selma, with comic dignity; "and in order to begin now my office of chief mistress of the ceremonies, thus—who shall I, in the first place, have the honour of introducing to you in this company?"

"O! the stately lady there, with the bird-of-paradise waving in the turban of silver gauze, and in a dress of black velvet—she, who now talks with your mamma and laughs—a fine woman; she might represent the queen of night."

"So she is," answered Selma laughing. "Signora Luna, as we sometimes call her, or, 'our lady with the bright eyes;' she is lady of honour to her majesty the queen, where, as one knows, night is turned into day; she will please you; she belongs to our very-best acquaintance, and this evening, over and above, Signora Luna is at the full; shall I not immediately intro——"

"No! no! not this evening; Signora Luna is, at this moment, too splendid for me. Who is the tall gentleman who now talks with her? a stately figure also, but somewhat ostentatious."

"Respect! I pray for—Alexander the Great, or the Great Alexander,—he has translated the logic and rhetoric of Aristotle; a most learned man, and the proper husband for the handsome Mrs. Luna."

"Humble servant! But my best one, here is the strangest company in the world—truly not of this world. Signora Luna and Alexander the Great! I wonder what celestial dignitary will next have the honour—that officer, for example, I would gladly know his name; he talks now with a gentleman who wears an order; a delightful countenance; but he seems to me to belong a little to the earth."

"Not so entirely, for he belongs more to the sea. We call him 'the Viking,'—for the rest he is called Commodore Captain Brenner, a very brave and distinguished man. Do you know with whom he speaks?"

"No, but I would willingly learn. Of a certainty he is called Aristides, or—Axel Oxenstjerna. Methinks I have seen him before."

"That is Baron Thorsten Lennartson: you will often see him here; he was Felix Delphin's guardian, and is now Flora's guardian."

"He is the same whom I fancied I knew again. You have given him no character-name, Selma; but I should like to give him one!"

"And what?"

"I would call him 'My lord,' because he seems as if he could be lord over himself; what say you?"

"You have said it excellently. It seems to me as if you had known him long."

"I have seen him years ago, and——but there stands a person beside Flora, whom, I think, I have seen also formerly; a regular, but marble-cold countenance; rather sallow, Voltaire-like features!"

"One of your relatives too! My and your brother-in-law, the Envoyé St. Orme; who only a few months ago came here from Paris."

"Virginia's husband! Ah, I ought to have recognised him: but it is above ten years since I saw him, at Virginia's marriage. How beautiful she was! That she must so soon leave the earth! One year after her marriage!"

"Yes, on the anniversary of her wedding;" said Selma, with a voice that shewed a painful remembrance. For this reason I continued my inquiries.

"And that young officer with whom you were dancing; a distinguished, handsome young man?"

"Another relation, Felix Delphin, Flora's brother. Is not Flora gloriously beautiful?"

"Very beautiful!"

"And how witty! how richly gifted! She has at least a dozen talents."

"That were almost too much!" said I laughing; "and now, thanks my sweet Selma, that you have so richly entertained me. I now see a gentleman approaching you with dancing intentions, and you shall not any longer drive your partners to desperation on my account. Be easy about me; I amuse myself excellently with looking on the dance, and on the new, interesting acquaintance that I have made, Signora Luna, Alexander the Great, my Lord ——."

"Bestow a glance on the philosopher," said Selma archly, and pointed to a servant in the livery of the family who approached with a tray of ices, and had a very grave countenance, with the features of a parrot.

"Take care, Jacob," continued she, merrily addressing him, "and look before you, that we do not waltz over you."

"O heaven defend me, Miss!" replied the philosopher with a rough voice, whilst a sudden illumination passed over his countenance, but which speedily resumed its dark expression, as he remained standing before me with his tray. 'Miss' floated away in the waltz, light as a breath.

Immediately after this my stepmother came up to me, with 'the rich old bachelor,' wearing the French order, and introduced 'your uncle, Chamberlain X.'

My uncle seated himself near me, and began the conversation with much politeness, which advanced from some compliments on myself, to a tolerably witty criticism of others, but which had a less digestible relish in a spiritual sense.

Whether it were that I was wearied by the journey, or by the noise of the ball, or was spoiled by the conversation which I had already had, certain it is that this did not please me, and a sort of twilight mist spread itself before my eyes over that animated life which had just before been so brilliant. At the same time I listened with pleasure to the praises of my step-mother. "A most excellent person," said my uncle, "I know no one in whom I have so great a confidence, no one on whom one can so much depend. When I would do a little good in secret, and would not wish it to be known, I always betake myself to her."

The Viking had left the company, after having at going out cast towards me a parting glance, which lived in my remembrance like a little point of light. Signora Luna's brilliant appearance vanished from our horizon, in order to ascend into the horizon of the Court, where she was at this moment in attendance. I only saw Selma when between the dances she came with a friendly word or a question bounding

towards me: thus I saw her also now by the side of her mother, now by an elderly lady in the company, as if she would make all happy.

After supper, somewhat occurred the impression of which I shall long retain. There arose a lively movement in the saloon, and I saw how my young sister was borne in an arm chair under the chandelier, whose light beamed around her, and the most animated vivat-cry resounded from the encircling gentlemen.

"My lord" was among those who thus exalted the young heroine of the festival, and right beautiful and princess-like sate she there, in the strong blaze of light, herself beaming with the charm of youth and becoming joy. An exclamation of admiration and homage went through the whole assembly. As my eyes sunk from the almost dazzling view, they were arrested by a countenance whose expression gave, as it were, a stab to my heart. It was the countenance of Flora. Vexation, envy, anger, lay in the almost spasmodic movements which thrilled through and disfigured the beautiful features,—but only for a moment. As her eyes encountered mine, that expression changed itself again; and soon afterwards she laughed and joked with the Envoyé St. Orme, who was seldom from her side, and whose observant and cold glance had for me something repulsive.

As I now wished to sneak away from the company my stepmother shewed a determined resolution of accompanying me to my chamber; but, on my

warm opposition allowed herself to be persuaded to remain quietly, and not to let Selma—who was again engaged for a dance, observe anything.

When I returned to my chamber, I found it changed. The disorderly, lying-about articles of dress had vanished, and order, taste, and kind attention had set its stamp upon every thing in this large and handsome room.

"The young lady herself has been up here, and has looked after every thing," said Karin, again supplying the fire which had burned low.

"Thanks, my young sister," said I in my heart.

I was fatigued and soon slept, but had disturbed dreams. All the people upon whom, in the course of the evening, my attention had been directed, I thought I saw arrange themselves in a quadrille with threatening gestures, and ready to pounce on one another. I found myself among them, and just on the point of—skirmishing with my stepmother. At one time floated past a sylph-like being, with glimmering wings, smiling lips, and enchanting zephyr-like movements, and danced between us, and wove us together with invisible but soft ribbons, and this sylph, this other Taglioni, was—Selma!

During this apparition, the tension of mind allayed itself; the bitterness ceased, the enemies made *chaine*, and I sank into a refreshing, sweet sleep, which let me forget the whole world, till the new morning awoke me.

And now, whilst all is quiet in the house, and seems to repose from the dance, I will take a somewhat nearer view of my past and present circumstances.

I have passed through with my stepmother two entirely different periods. The first I will call

THE PERIOD OF MY IDOLATRY.

At the age of eleven I saw my stepmother for the first time, and was so captivated that I adored her. This continued till my fifteenth year, when I was separated from her. But bitter were my days in this time of my idolatry; because never could a golden idol have been more deaf and silent to the prayers of its worshippers, than was my stepmother to my love. Besides this, I was a violent child, and in my whole being the opposite of the lovely and the agreeable, which my stepmother so highly valued, and of which she unceasingly spoke in quotations from the romances of Madame Genlis. I was compared with the enchantresses in these romances, and set down in proportion. In one word my stepmother could not rightly endure me, and I could not endure—Madame Genlis and her graces, who occasioned me so much torment. Ah! the sunburnt, wild girl grown up in the 'moors' of Finland, whose life had passed in woods and heaths, among rocks and streams, and amid dreams as wild and wonderful as the natural scenery amongst which

she grew; this girl was in truth no being for the saloon, for a French Grace. Transplanted from the fresh wilderness of her childhood into the magnificent capital, where huge mirrors on every side reflected every movement, and seemed scornfully to mimic every free outbreak which was not stamped by grace,—she was afraid, afraid of herself, afraid of everybody, and especially of the goddess of the palace. The governess and the servants called me 'the Tartar-girl,' 'the young Tartar.' My stepmother was never severe towards me in her behaviour, but crushed me by her depreciatory compassion, by her cold repulsion; and I soon could not approach her without burning cheeks, and a heart so full, so swollen—if I may say so—with anxious sighs, that the tongue in vain sought for a word. To find any fault in my stepmother was what I never thought of. Every, every fault lay certainly in me; but ah! I knew not how I should behave in order to become different, in order to become agreeable to her. I know that at this time more than once I besought heaven on my knees, never to give me a lover, if it, on the contrary, would only give me the love of my mother. But heaven, deaf to my prayer, gave me a lover, but—not the love of my mother; and I must learn to do without it; which was made easier to me by my being removed from her, and transplanted into another sphere of life, and—where also I suffered, but in another way.

Five years afterwards I came again into my father's house, and passed some time there. This epoch in relation to my former idol, may be called

THE EPOCH OF OPPOSITION;

for it was in many things opposed to the former. I had, after severe combat with life, and with myself, moulded myself to a stern and truth-loving being, who would see reality in every thing, and who despised all that appeared to be gilded in life as miserable froth. French worldly morality, accomplishment, and grace, were an abomination to me, towards which I now assumed as perfectly a well-bred deméanour as my stepmother had formerly assumed towards my world of nature. The shining veil through which I had regarded her had now fallen off. I now saw faults in her, and saw them through a magnifying-glass. She pleased me still, but I loved her no longer.

I had fallen in love with the spirit of Thorild, had imbibed his love of truth and integrity, but at the same time somewhat also of his less pleasant way of shewing them. And now clashed together Madame Genlis and Thorild, in the least pleasant manner, through my stepmother and me. For every quotation from Madame Genlis I had, always in warlike opposition, a quotation ready from Thorild, and my stepmother answered in the same spirit. Nevertheless, by degrees the French Marquese yielded to the Swedish philosopher; that is to say, she relin-

quished the field because such a rude fellow struck about him. It is to me a strange, half-melancholy remembrance, that my stepmother at this time was really afraid of me, and avoided me, evidently grieved by my unsparing earnestness. Several times also she endeavoured to govern and to overawe me; she would at times resume the sceptre, but in vain; it was broken in her hand: she saw this, and yielded silently and somewhat dispirited.

At the recollection of the harsh feeling I had at times, when I remarked this reaction in the relationship between us, I cannot preserve myself from a secret shudder; and would exclaim warningly to all over-severe parents, the counsel of the Apostle—"Parents, provoke not your children to anger!"

The fault was this time, for the most part, on my side. But I was embittered by the remembrance of that which I had suffered; and besides this, to say nothing of Thorild, was unclear in my views of life, and unhappy in my soul; and this may obtain for me some excuse. My stepmother, a joyous, and pleasant, and much esteemed lady of the world, was entirely accustomed to the sunny side of life, and wished only to see this. I was more accustomed to the dark side, and thus we separated more and more.

One bond of union existed at this time between us; the little Selma, a weakly, but interesting child. She seemed, by I know not what incomprehensible sympathy, attracted to me; which yet, according to my

Thorildish love of justice, did not at all accord with the reverence which was shewn to her at home. But I could not help feeling myself drawn to her. She was her father's darling, and his chiefest occupation. He was a friend and pupil of the great Ehrensvärd, of the man with the severe and pure sense of beauty, and he wished to form out of his daughter a being as harmonious and lovely as the ideal which he bore in himself: and not the eleven thousand heroines of modern scenes and novels, but the antique Antigone, so beautiful as woman, whilst she was so masculinely noble, was the prototype upon which he early directed the eye and heart of his daughter. Thus created he in her a new Antigone, and enjoyed through her a life which very weak health had rendered somewhat joyless. My stepmother was about this time very much occupied by her daughter Virginia, who by her beauty and her character might well flatter the pride of a mother. Admiration of her, and tenderness towards Selma, led us sometimes to an accordance of feeling.

We were again separated; and now that after ten years we are again come into contact, I am not without some uneasiness on account of our living together. Will it occasion a union, or—a deeper separation? One of the two, that is quite certain; because my stepmother, just as little as myself, has stood still during her decennium. We both have lived to see sorrow. My stepmother has lost her husband and

her beloved eldest daughter, and I, I have——yet nevertheless, that is now over, and I——am free.

That I am now better than when we last met, I will venture to hope. The philosophy which then made me so proud and so disputatious, has since then made me peaceable; THOUGHT has quietly and regulatingly laid its hand upon my brow; and life has cleared itself up, and the heart has calmed itself. Books have become my dearest companions; and observation, a friend which has accompanied me through life, and has led me to extract honey from all plants of life, even the bitter ones also. Thorild is still for me, as ever, a star of the first magnitude; but I no longer follow him blindly, and I have also become possessed of eyes for the constellation of Madame Genlis. In one thing will I always truly follow him —namely, in his doctrine, unceasingly to study and inquire after the good in all things.

On the shore where I was born, on the alder-fringed streams of Kautua, I often went, as a child, pearl-fishing, when the heat of the sun had abated the rigour of the water. I fancy still that the clear cool waves wash my feet; I fancy still that I see the pearl muscles which the waterfall had thrown together in heaps in the sand of the little green islands. Whole heaps of these muscles I collected together on the shore, and if I found one pearl among them——what joy! Often they were imperfect, half-formed, or injured; still sometimes I found right beautiful ones

among them. Now will I again go out to fish for pearls, but in——the stream of life.

The 2d of November.

I was yesterday morning interrupted by the messenger who called me to breakfast, and the messenger was my young sister, whose silvery clear voice asked at my door, "may one come in?" Yes, to be sure you may! besides sylphs are not easily bolted out, and one opens willingly the door and heart when a being like Selma desires to enter, and with benevolence and joy beaming from the diamond-bright eyes bends before thee, and shews to thee tokens of friendship and kindly inclination. She was so charming, my young sister, in the flower of youth and life; in her simple, well-chosen, tasteful dress; and, above all, in her captivating manner, that I seemed to see in her the personification of the muse of Franzén, whose name she bears.

"God guard thee, thou lovely being!" thought I silently, as I observed her, and something like a painful foreboding brought tears into my eyes.

Not without a beating of the heart did I follow her down stairs, and prepare myself to see my stepmother and my home by daylight.

But my feeling of anxiety vanished as I entered the inner ante-room, and my stepmother met me with looks and words which seemed the expression of cordial good-will. Beyond this, every thing in

the room was comfortable—atmosphere, furniture, to the inviting coffee service glittering with silver and real pearl.

"This is good indeed!" thought I.

Nothing here gave me greater pleasure than the sight of the collection of good oil-paintings which decorated the walls of the two ante-rooms. At the very moment when I was about to express my feelings on this subject, Flora entered. I scarcely recognised again the queen of the last night's ball. The delicate skin appeared coarse by daylight; the eye was dim; the dress negligent; and the beautiful countenance disfigured by an evident expression of ill temper. Selma, however, gains by being seen in daylight; her skin is delicate and fair; and her eyes have the most beautiful light, and the clearest glance, that I have ever seen in a human eye.

We seated ourselves to breakfast. We spoke of last evening's ball. My stepmother made on the occasion a little speech from the throne, which I had heard already in former times, but which had always somewhat embarrassed me. I was silent the while; but it excited in me a secret opposition, which I fancy my stepmother suspected; I know not otherwise why her glances were so often questioningly sent towards me. Selma's merry remarks interrupted the speech, and made us all laugh. Flora became again animated, and was witty and satirical. I put in my word also, and our gracious lady-mother ap-

peared highly delighted. We brought into review various good acquaintance in last evening's ball; various toilets were criticised. In the mean time, Selma stared roguishly at my collar, and pronounced it somewhat 'rococo.' My stepmother looked at my dress, and pronounced this also somewhat 'rococo.' With that I started the idea, that my person itself might be somewhat 'rococo,' which was negatived with the greatest and the most courteous zeal.

My stepmother said I was exactly at the handsome, 'modern age,' for a charming woman; in one word, *'la femme la trente ans, la femme de Balsac;'* and added various things half unexpressed, but yet perfectly intelligible; as that I had grown handsomer, in my complexion, in my eyes, in my hands; and all this, to me, poor daughter of Eve, was a great happiness to hear.

Selma was resolute about taking my toilet in hand herself, in order to make 'this also' modern! I promised to submit myself to her tyranny.

After breakfast, my stepmother and I continued the conversation *tête-à-tête;* and I remarked during this that her countenance had considerably altered, and I saw a something uneasy and excited in her looks, which I had not seen before. Yet her features had not lost their noble beauty. Whilst we talked, Selma watered her flowers, and sang thereto charmingly. The eyes of my stepmother turned often towards her, as if towards their light.

Flora was in a changeful humour. Now she opened a book, and now threw it from her; now she seated herself at the piano, and played something with good skill, but left off in the middle of the piece; now arranged her curls, and looked at herself in the mirror; at length she seated herself at the window; and made observations on the passers by. I called her secretly 'Miss Caprice.'

Thus stood affairs in our ante-room, when, in a pause of the conversation, we heard a faint hissing whistling, and slow steps approaching the room where we sate.

My stepmother cast an uneasy glance towards the door. Selma's song ceased, Flora looked quietly from the window, and upon—St. Orme, who entered the room. He and I were now formally introduced to each other. The repulsive impression which he had made upon me was not diminished by the shake of his hand. I receive an especial impression of the sort of person, by the manner of taking the hand, and cannot avoid drawing deductions therefrom,—more however by instinct than by reason, since my reason refuses to be led by outward impressions, which may be merely accidental; but I cannot alter it: a cordial warm shake of the hand takes my heart; a feeble, or imperfect, or cold, one repels it. There are people who press the hand so that it is painful for a good while afterwards; there are also those who come with two fingers; from these defend us! . . .

But again to the Envoyé whose hand-shake, weak and sharp, although the hand was soft, did not please me. He went from me to Flora, whose hand he kissed; he wished then to put his arm confidentially round Selma's waist, but she escaped from him, and called to me to come and make acquaintance with her flower-bulbs, which she merrily introduced to me under the names of 'King Hiskia,' 'Lord Wellington,' 'Grand Vainqueur,' 'l'ami du cœur,' 'Diana,' 'Galatæa,' and so on:—flower-genii hidden in the bulbs, which we rejoiced to see unfolding in the winter sun.

We were here interrupted by Flora's brother, Felix Delphin, who gave to Selma a half-blown monthly rose. She took it blushing. Aha, my young sister! But I know not whether I shall bestow thee on the young Delphin. His remarkably handsome and good face has a certain unpleasant expression which tells of an irregular life.

The Envoyé said something softly to my stepmother which made her change colour, and with an uneasy look, rise up and go with him into her room.

I left the young merry trio employed in propositions and schemes for the pleasures of the day and of the week, and went up into my own room. It had a glorious prospect—my room, and afforded me an opportunity of observing, in a free and extended heaven, the play of light and shadow of clouds, and of azure blue, which gives so much life and animation to the firmament above our heads.

We dwelt upon the Blasieholm, exactly upon the limits of the fields planted with trees, where the Delagarde Palace, with its towers, had elevated itself for centuries, and had been burnt down in one night. I look out from my window, and see and hear the roaring of the broad stream which separates the city from Norrmalm, and on whose shores have been fought so many bloody battles; on the haven, the bridge of boats, the royal castle, with the Lion Hill; the river promenade, further on, beneath the north-bridge; and on the other side of the island of the Holy Ghost, the blue water of the Mälar, and the southern mountains. From among the masses of houses upon the different islands, raise themselves the bold spires of the church-towers. To the left I have that of St. Catharine; to the right, that of St. James; and further off, the royal gardens, with their rich alleys, and —— I should never come to an end, were I to name all that I have and govern —from my window. And in my chamber, I have my pencils, my books, and——myself.

The 5th.

I have looked about me in the family, at least as far as regards the outside of people. Because rightly to decide between minds, and to pass through the outward into the actual being, requires more time. My silent question addressed to every one for this purpose is, "What wilt thou, what seekest thou in

life?" According to this rule, I botanize among human souls, and classify them.

"You must see Flora's paintings! You must hear Flora sing! You must see and hear Flora play in comedy! Flora must shew you her poetical and prose descriptions and portraits! they are so witty, so droll!" Thus I have often heard Selma say in these days; and she did not rest till I had seen and admired all,—and I have admired it with great pleasure, for Flora's turn for the arts is in many ways distinguished. But greater still, I fear, is her self-love, or what do expressions like the following denote:—

"I am not like common people; if I were like others, so and so, but I am really quite peculiar and remarkable, I cannot lower myself to the point of sight of these every-day figures," and more of the kind.

So seems with Flora the chief person to be an *I*, with Selma a *thou*. Yet I will not too hastily judge Flora.

Selma furnished me with a most agreeable morning yesterday, by allowing me to make acquaintance with several masterpieces in her beautiful collection of pictures. They were presents to her from her father, who collected them himself during his residence in Italy. By the accurate knowledge of the spirit of the various colouring, by the pure and severe sense of beauty, one recognised the scholar of Ehrensvärd. In the mean time, the conversation turned to Selma's

own residence in Rome. After Virginia's death, she accompanied her parents thither, who in this journey sought for the dissipation of their sorrow and an occasion of more highly accomplishing their beloved daughter. Here had Selma awakened to a consciousness of the beauty of life, but also to that of its pain, for here had she lost her adored father. Lennartson was then in Rome, had partaken with her happier days, and became in grief her support and consolation. With filial and brotherly tenderness he attached himself to the two mourning ladies, and conducted them, under his own faithful guard, back to their native land. Selma spoke with deep emotion of all that which he had been to them.

Towards evening came St. Orme and the young Delphin. St. Orme made Flora a present of a beautiful bracelet, over which she exhibited great delight, and allowed St. Orme himself to clasp it on her arm. After this, he held it forth and kissed it, and Flora—permitted it. Selma saw this with a disturbed look, and blushed.

We divided ourselves this evening into three parties. Felix and Selma threw the feather-ball, and played comedy in the farthest ante-room,—and their jests and her silver-ringing laughter came thence to us here; Flora allowed the firework of her wit to blaze before the Envoyé, who animated it by his satire, whilst he evidently ruled her and guided the conversation, which amused me, although I did not

understand the frequent secret hints in it, and the vexation which these seemed sometimes to excite in Flora.

My stepmother permitted her lights to shine before me, and instructed me on the positions of the relationship in the State. I allowed myself to be edified, lent my two ears towards three sides, and made now and then one and another wise remark on my stepmother's views, as I with Sibylline solemnity laid my cards in order to read the book of fate. For I should be no worthy daughter of the home of the magic arts, Finland, if I had not been somewhat skilled in the prophetic-lore of coffee and cards. True it is that I never was an altogether worthy scholar of the celebrated soothsayeress, Liboria, who had taught me her art; and I have never yet laid the cards with her devotion and her spirit, but——short and good, it amused me to see the play of fate in the cards, and I have often amused myself and others with it, and I did so also at this time.

When the evening was ended, the company separated; and Flora and I went through the little corridor towards our sleeping-rooms, which were separated by it; Flora remained standing, and said, as she suddenly turned herself towards me,

"You think certainly that I am in love with St. Orme."

"Hm!" answered I, "methinks it looks rather like it."

(For Flora this evening had really coquetted with St. Orme.)

"And know you not, wise Sibyl, that appearance often deceives? And so it is now. One must often appear that which one is not, in order to obtain that which one wishes. Craft and cunning were given to woman, in order to govern those who would rule her. They are her rightful weapons."

"So people often say," I replied, "but I have not found it so. I have found the force of truth and of earnestness—if they be used with prudence and love—alone right powerful, and that in men as in women."

"Truth and earnestness!" said Flora scornfully, "shew me where they can be found. We altogether cheat one another every day through life, however sanctifiedly we may conduct ourselves. How for example, is it with us two? Have we not for several days played off the most courteous cousins to each other, and yet I believe that at the bottom we think very lightly of one another. What is your opinion?"

"I think with you," said I, animated by this candour.

"Well then!" continued Flora, "were it not quite as well that we openly assumed our position of hating one another?"

"Why not?" said I, as before, "that would be perhaps an entirely new way to love."

"Novelty pleases me," said Flora laughing too; "thus then, from this day, we are open enemies, and

mutually cherish a little hatred. Is it not so, Miss Philosophia?"

"Agreed! Miss Caprice!"

We shook each other's hand laughing, and parted better friends than we had been before.

Notwithstanding Flora's words, I made up this evening, according to my unlooked-for conjectures, two matches, and united Flora and St. Orme, Selma and Felix. There was yet my stepmother and myself to provide for. Good, now! We will become the comfort of each other's age, and will govern the state together. Thorild and Madame Genlis can help us.

The 6th.

My unlooked-for conjectures are rendered vain; and by whom? By the Baron.

At breakfast, Flora and I declared in a lively way our agreement of the foregoing evening. My stepmother took the affair jestingly, as she would shew, and laughed at our 'hatred contract.' Selma looked on the affair, not as a merry one, but regarded us with grave and almost sorrowful eyes. I endeavoured to satisfy her by representing that I would shew her our hatred as a new way to friendship. She became again gay, and singing

> A little strift and brawl
> Injures not at all,

left us, in order to look after the domestic concerns. Soon after this came Baron Lennartson.

After some time of general conversation, he led Flora aside, and talked for a long time to her in a low voice. He seemed to beseech from her something earnestly, and during this seized, more than once, her hand. And Flora appeared not at all to oppose. I looked at my stepmother, and my stepmother looked at me.

"There seems to be quite a friendly understanding between guardian and ward," said I.

"Yes," replied my stepmother, "they are something more to each other than that."

"How! are they betrothed?"

"Yes! but it is not declared, and it will not yet be generally spoken of."

"Flora," continued I, "will next spring be of age, and will then have control over a considerable property?"

"Merely over the income of it," said my stepmother; "over the capital, her future husband alone will have control, according to the will of the uncle whom Flora and her brother have to thank for their property. He was a crabbed old man, and had no confidence in ladies' management of business. He ordered also that Flora should not marry before her five-and-twentieth year—which she completes in the spring—under the disadvantage of losing a considerable part of her property."

Selma entered. Lennartson ended his discourse with Flora, and went, after he had kissed her hand, and had said slowly and emphatically,

"Think on it!"

"That was indeed a very warm conversation," said my stepmother somewhat inquiringly to Flora, as she, after a glance at the mirror, approached us with beaming eyes.

"Yes," said Flora, "he is as kind as he is excellent; one must do every thing that he wills."

I sighed aloud.

"Now, why does Sophia sigh so?" inquired Flora.

"Because I conjecture that you will be right happy soon with Lennartson, and receive his hand. I must indeed nourish my hatred."

"O!" said Flora, laughing, "do not mourn yet. It will not be so good with me," added she, half melancholy. "The talk is now less about me than about Felix. My guardian wishes that I should be for him a prototype, and an example, and a guide—but my influence upon my dear brother is not much to be boasted of; and I well know who, better than I, could work upon him, and could change my dear Felix into a true bird, 'a phœnix,' if she would.—What do you think, Selma?"

Selma turned herself away, and said, half to herself—"Do not let us talk of it."

"Well, then, let us talk of my masquerade costume," replied Flora with liveliness; "come and help me to choose the colours; you have so good a taste." She took Selma by the arm, and the two young cousins chasséed, singing, out of the room.

Later, as I went with a message to Selma, in Flora's room, I found them in eager discourse, amid gold and silver gauze.

"But, Flora, that is too dear!" said Selma.

"But it is so divinely beautiful!" said Flora.

"But it may still be beautiful—and the difference in the cost is so considerable! You have indeed promised Lennartson himself to be an example to Felix."

"Yes, yes, in generals, but not in all trifles. In them I will follow my own head. So look Selma dear, and do not assume airs of wisdom to me; they do not become you—be a little bit livelier. Let us come to my turban.—Ah, aunt! That was divine! My aunt shall say"——and Flora turned herself warmly to my stepmother, who just then entered, and now without hesitation entered into Flora's plans respecting the expensive costume which should change her into a Circassian.

After this she said to me, whilst she embraced Selma, "What think you of this child here, Sophia, who will sit at home by her old mother, instead of going to the masquerade at W.'s?"

"I love her on that account," said I.

"How should Miss Philosophia do otherwise, towards such behaviour?" said Flora, somewhat pointedly.

"But if I," continued my stepmother, her eyes twinkling with delight, "take upon myself all cost of the dress, and ——"

"That mamma should not do, if mamma loves me," exclaimed Selma. "It is really so, that I have no desire for this ball, and still less to ruin myself for it. My mother, beside, would merely go there on my account, and——one thing with another, I am convinced that I shall be far more pleased if I remain at home this evening."

"Now you wish to win Lennartson's heart;" said Flora, bitterly.

"Flora!" cried Selma, with a look of astonishment and wounded innocence. Her eyes filled with tears.

"Pardon!" besought Flora, and kissed her burning cheek. "I did not mean what I said. That which I really mean is, you deserve him far more than I do."

We now, every one of us, got very deep into dresses and costumes.

The 9th.

Selma has altered my wardrobe, and has tyrannized me to become modern. And I have let myself be tyrannized over, because I see that it gives her and my stepmother so much pleasure. And my stepmother! she has embarrassed me with her beautiful presents. But she had such evident pleasure in giving, that I could not do otherwise than receive with gratitude.

To-day, in childish pleasure over my mid-day toilet, Selma exclaimed,

"Ah! I would that Balsac saw you. He would

directly bring you into a novel, and let you awaken at least three deadly passions."

"That may be," said I, "a strong proof of the power of poetical fancy, since, in reality, I should not indeed awaken one passion."

"Um, um, um!" said my stepmother, with a courteously-designed diplomatic mien.

"Neither do I wish it any more," continued I.

> The times of folly are gone for ever,
> The days of wisdom are at hand.

"A wisdom," said Flora, "which perhaps smacks a little of the wisdom of the fox under the grapes. I, for my part, never believe that a lady does not wish to please and to win hearts, and incense and sacrifice, be she called Cleopatra, or Ninon, or St. Philosophia."

"St. Philosophia may sometime teach you otherwise;" answered I, seriously; and my stepmother, who at times seems somewhat afraid that the hatred between Flora and me might become earnest, hastened to turn the conversation by dinner, during which the merry jests of Selma put all in good humour. Flora and I said many amusing things about our 'hatred-contract,' and added many clauses and paragraphs. My stepmother scattered over them laughter and joke. From what I see, I suspect that we are a set of clever people here together, and can make merry with one another.

The 12th.

Our every-day life begins to assume more and more

shape before my eyes. A deal of dissipation reigns here, and I am glad that I am withdrawn from this to my own solitary chamber. The two young girls sport away their lives, but with very dissimilar grace.

Flora has perpetually changing, and for the most part, vexatious, tempers. The least adverse occurrence brings on a storm. Selma, on the contrary, has a golden temper; her whole being is harmony, and one sees this in her light graceful gait; one hears it in the joyous singing which announces her approach or her presence, here and there in the house; whilst she now occupies herself in the domestic concerns, now keeps a sort of dancing attendance by my mother, now takes part in all Flora's revolutions, or now cares for the strangers who daily visit the house. The domestics obey her with joy, because she always speaks kindly to them, and her arrangements evince a good and wise understanding. The Philosopher himself glows at the sight of her. In one word, she is the life and sunshine of the house. The only thing that disturbs me in her is an often-protruding too satirical humour, which at times—shall I say it—degenerates into malice? The word is severe, but I think that it is true. But with such gay animal spirits as Selma and Flora have for their daily companions, it is not easy to maintain here also the right tact and the right harmony. And then the pleasure which my stepmother has in every thing that awakens life and spices it, and her love to the young girls, makes her

often not observe that they scatter about cayenne pepper instead of harmless salt.

Between me and my stepmother much politeness prevails,—although no confidence. I fancy that we are rather afraid of each other. We have commonly an hour's *tête-à-tête* each day, in which we together care for the affairs of the state, and make our '*reflexions chrétiennes et morales*,' on the course of time and things. In these, and in all our politenesses, I remark that we secretly strive to enlighten and to convert one another, and even as with our profound words and views to startle one another. Thus it happens, that while we are trying to set together the state-machine, it sometimes, between us two, is near going a little to pieces. For, although we both of us maintain that we stand in the most exact '*juste milieu*' of heavenly right; still my stepmother leans considerably to the aristocratic side of the state, just as I towards the democratic. My stepmother, who in her former importance as wife of the District-Governor exercised no inconsiderable influence upon the affairs of the government, conceives herself to have not only all the knowledge of experience, but also the skill of a ruler. I, on the contrary, conceive that from my philosophical point of vision, I see every thing and understand rather better; and all this occasions at times a little strift between us, which however never becomes violent. Because when my stepmother raises her voice with a 'believe me, my friend,'—I

am silent, and amuse myself by assuming a disbelieving air; and although I also put myself in opposition, I still let my stepmother always have the last word or tone, namely, the diplomatic 'Um, um, um!'

In the evening, the family however is mostly at home (they say that in the New-Year this will be different); and Felix Delphin, St. Orme, and Lennartson, often join it. I see plainly that the Baron has directed an inquiring glance upon Flora and St. Orme. It seems to me often that his eyes turn from the brilliant effect-seeking Flora to Selma, and rest upon her with a certain tender observation; and she —why are her eyes in his presence so continually shaded by the long dark eyelashes? Why hears one nothing of the gay sallies, of the sagacious and fine observations, which otherwise are peculiar to her? Yet Flora would of a truth not endure that. I have seen this in one and another pointed jealous glance which has flashed from Flora's eyes. But I also have received my share in this glance when Lennartson gives me any considerable portion of his attention, which, I say it with pleasure, not seldom happens.

The Baron—no! No description of him. Bulwer, who has thrown so many deep glances into the nobler class of the female mind, observes with justice, how indifferent to them is the beauty or plainness of a man. It is the impression of the character in demeanour, gestures, and words, which fetter or repel. Thus, not a word about the Baron's height, size, hair,

teeth, and so on. Neither should I have much to say on the subject; but I know this, that the impression of his personal appearance is such that one does not forget it, and never will. One feels, as it were, exalted by it, and his look—yes, of that I must say one word.

There are eyes, in which one looks as it were into a brightened world,—so must the eyes of Schelling be, and therefore I wish for once, to be able to look into them;—there is also a look which I call especially the look of the statesman. Some one has said, "philosophers see more light than shapes;" and I say "most others see more shapes than light;" but the true statesman sees at the same time the shapes of life, and sees them in the true light of life. His glance is at the same time bright and distinct. Such is Lennartson's glance, and one sees soon that sun as well as lightning can speak from it.

I am glad to have seen and known this man.

St. Orme makes beside him a decided contrast, although he also has a distinguished exterior, and is rich in knowledge, wit, and experience of life. But he wants a something in his being, a something which ennobles the whole. He inspires no confidence, no esteem. Besides this, he has a certain uneasy activity in his arms and fingers, which reminds one of a spindle, and makes him—at least to me, disagreeable.

How should I understand the way in which Flora acts towards these two men? It seems to me certain

that she loves the Baron; but why then coquet with St. Orme? Why accept presents from him?

A guest, who also begins to present himself here more frequently is, 'the rich old bachelor,' my uncle. He is tolerably agreeable and entertaining; and if I might not fear being proud, I might believe that his visits had reference to—me.

He sees in me perhaps a '*passable souper.*' My stepmother begins to give me one and another well-meant little hint on the subject; I pretend that I understand nothing about it.

Among the frequent guests here are the two sisters von P., Mrs. and Miss, commonly called here the Lady Councillors of Commerce, who drive an important trade in the city with the phrases 'they said,' 'they think,' 'they know.' To us this is somewhat ridiculous; but yet we are no despisers of the commerce which we laugh at, for both sisters know a vast many people, and the unmarried lady is a wide-awake person, whose great, peering eyes see very sharply and correctly, and whose tongue is more amusing than keen. She has above ninety cousins; all on the side of the ladies, as she told us the other day.

The 14*th.*

Yesterday evening I made the acquaintance of 'our nearest,' as Selma calls the circle of the most trusted friends of the house, in contradistinction to 'our remotest.' When I, as usual, towards half-

past seven, came down into the room of my step-mother, I saw Signora Luna sitting in one corner of the sofa, but evidently in the wane, as Selma also whispered when she introduced me to her. The beautiful Countess saluted me somewhat coolly, yet I was pleased with the pressure of her warm, silky-soft hand.

The rest of the company consisted of Baron Alexander G——, a young lieutenant, Åke Sparrsköld; a sister of Flora's, a widow, and ten years older than herself; the Baroness Bella P., whom we call 'the Beauty,' and whose features are of the first class, but in expression only of the second; of the handsome old lady Mrs. Rittersvärd, and her daughter Helfrid; and of St. Orme and Lennartson.

They spoke of a now greatly-admired French romance which St. Orme had lent to Flora. St. Orme extolled the strength of the characters, and the boldness and pomp of its colouring. The young Sparrsköld considered the last to be false; and in the first he found an exaggeration which robbed them of all strength. Every human effort immediately mounts up to insanity, and loses as well proportion as design; even virtue cannot appear sublime, without being placed on stilts and becoming unnatural. And the object of the actions! Always merely single, contracted motive, always self, selfish, isolated happiness; never an endeavour, an interest, which embraces the great interests of humanity. And these

faults he believed were to be found in the whole of the new French literature.

Lennartson agreed warmly in this; "and the aim of this literature," said he, "is not merely false in itself. They are untrue as chronometers, and libel the nobler and one may say the UNIVERSAL SPIRIT of the times—the spirit which places individual efforts and individual well-being in the most complete connexion with the universal good. In regard to this feeling towards the UNIVERSAL, towards the WHOLE, the present young France might go to the school of the old Rousseau. With all their faults, still his romances are, to a great degree, patterns for pictures of this kind of citizen social life. See how here the single individuals represent the chief varieties of mankind; and how, when they embrace one another in love, this love stiffens not into egotism, but expands itself, in order to embrace the most sacred institutions of the citizen social life, the life of humanity and of nature in its divine existence, and domestic life steps forth, as it must do, as the point from which the great life of the world will be sanctified and blessed."

St. Orme shrugged his shoulders. "Poor Rousseau! With all his ideal romances he was merely—a fanatic!" said he, and went to join Baron Alexander in the great ante-room.

"I feel that you have right on your side," said I to Lennartson, "but—still I would so willingly see

the progress in every important formation of harmony —see an actual advance forward, a step upon the path of development,—and it cannot be denied that this French literature presents characters and situations of a variety and depth such as the world has never before seen; it presses into every corner of social existence—its every moment of suffering, darkness, and dissonance: this is probably only a descent into hell, but—must not an ascent into heaven be near; a change in which night's deepest night shall be illumined by its most beautiful morning? Is it indeed possible that the highest point of this literature shall be only—a return to Rousseau?"

"Yes," replied Lennartson, smiling at my zeal, "but as I just observed, merely as concerns the looking to, the feeling FOR THE WHOLE, the universal. I see, like you, in this literature, a decided new development, and it is not the first time that the people who exhibited this have broken up new paths for the world. But it is yet merely fragmentary; it contains studies for a great composition. And some day certainly will the master step forward who will arrange these chaotic creations into a harmonious world. Yet—perhaps, the model for this must first of all present itself in actual life."

"How do you mean?" asked I, excited.

"Permit me," continued Lennartson, "to direct your attention to the principal feature in the better, beautiful literature of our time—namely, to its

tendency,—that of presenting woman as the point in life from which animating, renovating strength proceeds. And I confess that I accord with it. I expect at this period of the world much—from woman."

That the female auditorium, before whom the Baron spoke these words, looked up to him with pleasure and acknowledgment, was merely natural. A modest joy glowed in Selma's beautiful eyes, whilst from the flashing eyes of Flora broke forth something which I might call—great.

My stepmother now made the move that we should go into the saloon and hear some music. We followed her.

Flora called Lennartson to the piano, and sung and played bewitchingly for him; at intervals they talked in a low voice.

I attached myself to Helfrid Rittersvärd and Lieutenant Sparrsköld, who, with his honest countenance and his frank way of acting and speaking, pleased me particularly. 'The Beauty' joined herself to us, and seemed to wish to make a deathless impression upon Åke Sparrsköld, but he seemed for the present, like myself, to be more taken with Miss Rittersvärd.

When I see a young lady who is as ugly as Miss Helfrid Rittersvärd, and at the same time has so tranquil a manner, and has so pleasing and happy a way of acting and speaking, I form a very high opinion of her. I feel that some way a high consciousness exalts her above all the petty miseries of

weakness; she has a full confidence in the noble within herself and in her fellow-beings, and calls forth thereby their esteem and every sound feeling, which easily vanquishes all outward troubles. I found Helfrid's conversation spiced and animating, and I fancy that Sparrsköld found it so too, although 'the Beauty' exercised upon him certainly her power of attraction.

My stepmother played piquet with her good friend Mrs. Rittersvärd. This amiable old lady suffered from a nervous affection of the head, and is come to Stockholm in order to consult the physicians there on the subject. Her daughter obtains the means needful for this by her translations of foreign works, and also assists thereby in providing for two younger brothers. Well deserves she the name in earnest of 'Miss Estimable,' which Flora gives to her, half in jest.

Selma was here and there in the company, and took a friendly part in every thing that went forward.

St. Orme played cards with the Baron Alexander and Felix Delphin, but he threw often from his cards sharp glances upon Flora and Lennartson, who, at the piano, had forgotten the music for a low but warm conversation. This was suddenly interrupted by St. Orme, who exclaimed—

"Flora! my best Flora! bestow upon me one quarter of a thought. I am to-night an unlucky player; come to my help with a piece of good advice.

Tell me in which colour shall I play. . . . In black or red?

"In black," answered Flora.

"In black!" repeated St. Orme, "why do you not rather council me in red? Red is your favourite colour—crimson *red*—is it not? or do I remember erroneously?"

"I do not remember!" said Flora, with apparent indifference, as she rose, and a crimson glowed upon her cheeks.

"But I remember it, I!" returned St. Orme. "Crimson is your colour, and therefore—gentlemen! Six in hearts. This game I hope to win," continued he, nodding to Flora, who suddenly went out. She soon returned; but her joyous mood was gone, and her cheerfulness for the remainder of the evening was constrained.

As St. Orme went away, I heard him say to Flora half offensively, "Thanks for your council, dear cousin! I won my game! and with your colour upon my heart, I hope to win it also in the future."

"Do not make yourself sure of it!" said Flora, out of humour.

"Defy me not!" said St. Orme slowly, half in jest, but with warning earnestness; and he seized her resisting hand and kissed it, and bowed smiling to her.

What may that portend?

The 16th.

I went out to-day far and alone, and enjoyed myself with my own thoughts. Returned home, I found visitors, and among them the Chamberlain. I saw certain strange telegraphic signs between my stepmother and him.

Flora lives only in her costume, and in her thoughts of the ball at Minister —— What weariness for—an evening!

Many projects for balls and other pleasures. I, for my part, say 'No!' to all of them. I say that I am too old to dance.

"Um, um, um!" says, politely negatively, my stepmother.

I think, however, of being present at the New-Year's assembly, because I there shall see the royal family more nearly.

The 17th.

Noble flowers have nectaries, honey-containers, in which the noblest juices of the plant are preserved. But in order to come at these, one must sometimes—if one has not the genius of a bee, or of Hummel, but has merely unskilful human fingers—one must sometimes wound the flower. The human soul has also its nectaries, which we must often handle as we do the flowers.

The occasion for these reflections is the following:—I found Selma and Flora, as well as my stepmother,

occupied by reviewing the acquaintance and friends of the house. They made sharp work of it, and most of them were treated without mercy or forbearance.

Flora was the severest, but Selma soon followed her footsteps. My stepmother laughed a deal at this mimicry and these caricatures of the young girls. I also began to laugh, for the satire was strikingly witty; but when a couple of good, estimable people, and whom the young girls liked with their whole hearts, were handled quite remorselessly, I felt myself wounded, and was troubled at all the poison which these young human flowers, as it were, breathed forth.

I made use of a moment, when my stepmother was out of the room, to tell them, affectionately, how deeply I felt this.

Both blushed; and Flora said, "I could very well see by your silence that you were thinking about reading us this lesson. But my best Philosophia, if you will preach, do it in a Finland church, but not in the saloons of Stockholm, where you will convert nobody. It is here as everywhere in the great world, '*tous les genres sont bons, hors le genre ennuyeux.*' Besides this, when people are young they must amuse themselves and laugh. It is time enough to be grave and silent when the years of wisdom come. And when we shall be old maids, then we shall be perhaps as moral and virtuous as you."

I was silent; for what was the use of replying to anything like this? and when my stepmother came

in I went out softly, and up to my own room. I was inwardly uneasy. Selma is not that which I fancied, thought I, and looked up to the beaming stars, which in the evening twilight began to step forth from the deep blue, and thought of the stars which I had seen beaming in her eyes, and mourned sincerely over their dimming.

But I had not been long alone, when I heard light footsteps springing up-stairs. My door opened, and ——Selma threw herself into my arms, and said—

"Are you very indignant against me?"

"No longer, now, my sweet Selma!" said I, affected by her heartfelt manner.

"But you have been indignant, you have been dissatisfied with me, and that certainly more than once. Is it not so?"

I assented. I told her how I feared that Flora might mislead her to an unworthy passion for censure and severity, and how it grieved me to see dark specks in her soul. I spoke earnestly of that blameable sharpsightedness to little things, which blinded the mind to what was great and conciliatory; of the disposition of mind which led us to depreciate others in order to exalt ourselves. I became severer than I had wished to be, and pronounced this judgment to be self-righteousness and phariseeism. Selma listened to me in silence, and became more and more grave and pale.

"You are right!" at length she said; "you are

certainly quite right. Ah! I have reflected so little upon myself; till now I have given so little heed to myself.——Everybody has been so kind to me, has in fact spoiled me. But do you tell me of my faults, Sophia! I will alter, I will improve myself!"

"But you must not weep, Selma."

"And what matters it if I weep? Tears truly must wash away the hateful spots from my soul. Be not afraid for me, and spare me not, Sophia. Tell me always the truth, as long as you consider me worthy of hearing it."

I embraced the affectionate girl warmly, and told her how happy she made me.

We talked now calmly of the difficulties of a true middle-path along the field of social criticism. I agreed as to the difficulty of finding it; and that although I watched over myself, I had often to reproach myself with sins of the tongue. An affectionate tone of mind, which regarded more the intrinsic than the accidental in man, would be the safest guide to this. And for the rest, the more experienced, and the more prudent we were, should we, all the more, find better subjects for our sharp-sightedness than the short-comings of our neighbours.

"You speak of something," said Selma, "which I for some time have dimly felt. Since the death of my father and teacher, I am, I fear, gone back in many things. I know not how it is now;——but my days are trifled away in nothing.—I often feel an

emptiness—I fear that I have sunk.——Ah! thank you, Sophia, that you have awoke me to it. But help me now again into a good way. Help me to occupy myself with that which makes wiser and better. You are indeed my elder sister! Be now also my friend!"

How willingly will I be so. We now projected together a new arrangement of life; we laid our plans for the future, and continued our conversation long, by which I was permitted to see a soul which is capable of the noblest perfection.

That which had begun so gravely ended however jocosely; inasmuch as I promised, as an equivalent for Selma's instruction in singing and Italian, to teach her Finnish; she promised in return to exercise my patience severely, because she never would understand Finnish.

When Selma had left me at the call of her mother, I felt that I loved her, and that truly for the whole of my life. Never, never shall I forget how she stood before me, and said—

"What matters it if I weep? Tell me always the truth; I will alter, I will improve myself." And the quiet tears in the noble, soul-beaming countenance—I wish that Lennartson had seen and heard her. Oh, there are still beautiful things on earth!

The 19*th.*

Selma was right in her prophesying. The masquerade evening was to us home-tarriers a far

pleasanter evening than if we had figured in the most magnificent parts.

Whilst Selma gave the finishing hand to Flora's toilet, I went down to my stepmother, and found Felix, the Viking, and the Baron, with her.

The latter was very little talkative, and often turned his eyes towards the door.

When Flora, attended by Selma, entered in her magnificent costume, he seemed struck by her beauty. I was to that degree, that I could not withhold an exclamation of surprise and rapture. We were all carried away; and Selma's beaming eyes went beseechingly around in order to collect honour and incense for the beautiful Circassian, who stood there in proud consciousness of her youth, her beauty, and her splendour. Lennartson's admiration, however, quickly cooled; his glance became serious; and when St. Orme entered in an ornamental Turkish dress—he and Flora were to dance together in a quadrille—he suddenly vanished, without taking leave of any one.

Flora's countenance plainly shewed an expression of disquiet; but it soon vanished, and she smiled with pleasure as the Envoyé, with well-selected oriental compliments, conducted her to the carriage, where her sister awaited her, in order to drive her to the ball. The Viking remained with us, and so did Felix, although he was to have been at the masquerade.

We spoke of Baron Lennartson; and I expressed my delight in the strong feeling for the worth of woman and for her usefulness, which he had acknowledged a few evenings before. The Viking said — There is no one who thinks more highly of woman; and no one also who is severer in his requirings from her than he. The admiration and love which his mother inspired him with, seem to have laid the foundation of this.

My questions drew forth many relations of the childhood and youth of the Baron, which I have collected together in the following picture.

Lennartson's father, General Lennartson, was a man of violent temper and dissolute life. All care for the children and their education devolved upon the mother; a noble, highly accomplished lady, but of feeble health.

The eldest son, our Lennartson, was in his youth of a delicate constitution and irritable temperament. The mother dedicated to him the greatest attention; not an effeminating, but a tenderly cherishing care, which makes strong in love. By the bed of the boy the quiet mother often sate, and related to him, or read aloud of men who have overcome the infirmities of the body by the strength of the soul and the will, and who have become the glory and benefactors of their nation. Especially dwelt she upon the great men of his fatherland; those strong-minded and pious men, who, by the union of those qualities,

laid the foundation of the character of the Swedish people when this is true to itself.

The boy listened inquisitively; his breast opened itself to great thoughts; and the soul, nourished by the marrow of heroism, soon raised up the weaker body. This also was strengthened by useful exercises. At the age of fifteen, Lennartson excelled the greater number of his companions in pliancy and strength of body. The mother soon saw the affectionate spirit of her son break forth in its whole wealth, but with its dangerous propensities likewise. The young Lennartson had, like his father, a violent and inflexible temper. His father's severity towards his mother, excited him in the highest degree; and this gave occasion to scenes between father and son which unsettled the weak health of the mother, but —strange enough—broke also the rude power of the father. He became, as it were, afraid of his son; afraid, at least, in all things which concerned the mother, and he no longer dared to offend against her. This St. John-like nature had brought up an eagle; and this eagle now spread its wings defendingly over her. Happy in the love of her son, but terrified also at the almost fearful temper which she saw break forth in him, she wished to teach this young power to govern itself; and sought to strengthen him in that which alone gives all power its truth, its proportion, and its right direction; namely, in the true fear of God. Early had she per-

mitted the great figures of humanity to step forward before the eye of the child. Now she endeavoured to let the inquiring understanding of the young man ascend to a clear conception of the reality of life, and of the doctrine which had cradled in unconscious love the heart of the child. For this end she went to work in quite another way to most parents and teachers. Instead of removing books, which are looked upon as dangerous to piety, she brought these forward. She read with her young son the works of the most renowned atheists and deists, from the oldest times to the present day, and let his reason exercise itself with comparing their doctrines with the doctrine in which a personally revealed God gives most complete solution of the enigma of life, as well as in this revelation of His will and His being, the only secure, fully-efficient guarantee for the fulfilment of man's deepest longing, his holiest hope on earth.

She let him in this way surround himself with perfect difficulties, and, as it were by his own strength, open the way to the innermost centre of life. She it was who brought forward objections founded upon the doctrines of the Naturalists; he it was who answered them. But the joy which beamed from the eyes of the mother at the happily solved difficulties, probably enlightened the son secretly in his inquirings.

And whilst she thus conducted him to an independent and firm point of mind, she taught him to have esteem for his opponent, and to value all honest

inquiry and all sincere opinion, and to acknowledge the sproutings of truth even in immature doctrines.

Lennartson often spoke of this period of his life, as of the happiest and richest. His mother's affectionate glance and approving word were his dearest reward. She caressed him but very rarely, although he often fell upon his knees before her in fanatical reverence, and kissed her hands and her dress. Only sometimes at those moments, in which she remarked that the young heart was too violently consumed by a desire for reciprocation, did she allow his glowing cheek to repose on the breast which only beat for him, but which already bore the seed of death in a cruel and generally incurable malady.

Carefully concealed she from her son the pangs by which she had been wasted for many years. For the first time, when an operation was necessary, Lennartson became aware of the sufferings and the danger of his mother. She wished him to be absent during the painful hours, and sought by an innocent guile to deceive him as to the time. But he allowed himself not to be deceived; he allowed himself not to be sent away. His arms sustained her in the painful hour; her eyes rested during it upon his, and for his sake she bore all without the slightest complaint.

And she was able to live yet three years for his sake; yet three years to be happy through him. Then broke out the malady incurably. Whilst she spoke of immortality and of the certainty of seeing

him again, and besought of him to have 'patience with his father,' she departed in his arms.

The effect of this loss upon the youth of eighteen was terrible, and matured him early to manhood. His tone of mind at this time, and his love to the studies in which he had early found such pleasure, determined him secretly to enter the clerical profession, and his studies at the University, like the studies of the greatest statesman of Sweden especially—were theological. In these studies he was—also like Axel Oxenstjerna—interrupted, in order, according to the will of his father, that he should travel abroad. As Secretary to the Swedish embassy, he travelled to Vienna.

The success which he had here, and the talents which he exhibited, determined, according to the wishes of his father, his future destiny; and he has now shewn, on the path of the statesman, that he deserves all esteem and confidence.

After my stepmother and the Viking had alternately given this account of Lennartson's life, Selma reminded me, that the first evening I had seen him here, I had said that I had many years before already made his acquaintance, and I must now relate how and where; which I did in the following manner:—

It is now about fifteen years ago, when I found myself at a dinner-party, at which were present General Lennartson and his son. The company was large, and consisted for the most part of the con-

nexions and acquaintance of the General. Merely a corner of the table separated me from young Lennartson. The distinguished young man was good enough to busy himself about me, at that time a bashful girl of fourteen, and related to me Schiller's Wallenstein, and I forgot over this both eating and drinking. During the meal-time, the general conversation was of a disturbance which had taken place in the military academy, and they mentioned a young man who was at the head of it, who had made himself amenable for several uproars, and in consequence thereof was expelled. Some of the guests gave the young man very hard names, called him 'gallow's bird,' and so on.

The young Lennartson undertook alone the defence of the young man, and did it with warmth; he shewed how, in this last instance, he had been provoked by words into the existing quarrel, and how even his errors bore traces of a noble heart. The General took up the affair against his son, and became ever more violent against the accused. Young Lennartson continued to defend him too even against his father with great respect, but with great determination. All at once the General became, as it were, insane, and turned himself personally against his son, with an outburst of rudeness and the most violent accusations.

From that moment, in which the father's attack was directed against himself, the son became wholly silent. It is true that his cheeks and his lips became somewhat paler; but his look upon his father was so

firm, his whole bearing was so calm, that one might almost have believed that he was almost insensible to his father's unworthy behaviour. Whilst all looks, with a kind of anxiety, passed to and fro between father and son, mine dwelt with a feeling of admiration upon the noble countenance of the latter. Involuntarily they riveted themselves upon a small gleaming speck upon the white, youthful, polished forehead, which became larger and more shining, and at length rolled down a clear sweat-drop, to conceal itself in the dark eyebrow. This was all which betrayed the struggle within himself. The General at length paused from want of words and breath, and for a moment it was as still as death at the table. The young Lennartson was as still as the rest; no affectation of indifference or defiance disfigured his beauty. He seemed to me on account of his perfect self-government to be worthy of admiration, and many seemed to share this impression with me. All, however, seemed desirous by general conversation to throw off the painful excitement. The young Lennartson also took part in it without constraint, but he was more grave than before—the end of Wallenstein I did not hear.

"Do you remember," inquired the Viking from me, "the name of the young man whose great deeds gave occasion to this scene?"

"No! the name I have forgotten, or else did not hear. But I mentioned some facts which I remem-

bered in that history, and which represented him as a restless and powerful character."

"And that then was the first thing which you heard about ME!" said the Viking softly, but emphatically.

I looked at him in surprise; his eyes were directed to me with a troubled earnestness; and I read in them such dark remembrances, that I quickly withdrew mine, vexed and almost full of remorse for having awakened them.

My stepmother remarked significantly, "Lennartson is in truth a rare character, and I wish that all young men would take him for an example."

"Yes! who does not wish to resemble him?" exclaimed Felix Delphin, who seemed to draw the moral to himself. "Ah! if he were only—how shall I say it?—a little less superior. But he stands so high, that one hardly dare look up to him. He is—too free from faults."

"Without faults Lennartson is not, just as little as any other mortal," said Brenner, "but they are such faults as belong to great natures. In the mean time they prevent him from being happy."

"Is he not happy?" exclaimed Selma, and looked up with a troubled and astonished glance.

"He is not happy," said Brenner, "because he is so seldom satisfied with himself. He has an insatiable thirst which consumes him."

"And what thirst?" asked I.

"The thirst after perfection."

We were all silent a moment. Brenner's word and tone had awakened something great within us. At length said Felix,—

"It is precisely this greatness in him which bows down and humiliates natures less gifted. He overawes more than he exalts. For my part, I confess that I at the same time admire him and—fear him."

"And yet, Felix," said Selma, "you know that he is very kind."

"Yes, when I deserve it, Selma! And see, there it is. I do not often deserve it, and then——Ah! how often, when I was with him, when I heard him, when I saw him act, I have despised myself for this reason, that I was so unlike him! And I have then made the best resolutions. But when I come out again into the world, then I forget myself and him, and do as other fools do, and then—I am afraid of him—of his look, because he is one with my conscience, and —condemns me."

Selma extended her hand to her cousin, and looked at him with bright, tearful eyes. Young Delphin was evidently affected, seized the offered hand, kissed it vehemently many times, and hastened away.

It is impossible that Selma can be indifferent towards this amiable young man! Soon afterwards the Viking left us also, with his gloomy thoughts.

When we were alone, my stepmother gave me the following description of the former circumstances of the Viking.

Vilhelm Brenner, in his childhood, was remarkable for his good heart and his unquiet head. In the military academy he was universally beloved, at the same time that his pranks and his disorderly conduct involved him in quarrels, and drew upon him many annoyances. He was without stability, and was impelled by the suggestions of the moment. Various acts of insubordination drew upon him the severity of the law; this he met with obstinacy and defiance, and was in the end expelled from Carlberg. His connexions, provoked by his behaviour, received him with a sternness and depreciation which completely irritated the passionate soul of Brenner. He looked upon himself as dishonoured by the whole world; saw the future closed before him; and, in order to deaden his despair, plunged into still wilder disorders than before. When he had run through all that he possessed, and saw himself in debt beyond his power of payment, he turned his destructive hand against his own life. But a preventing hand was laid upon his, and he was withheld from the brink of the abyss; and he who withheld him was Thorsten Lennartson. He caused light to ascend into the darkened soul of Brenner. He shewed to him the future yet open; he let him feel that he had his own fate yet in his hands; that he might again obtain the esteem of social life, and the peace of his own conscience.

But not merely with words did Lennartson seize with a guiding hand upon the fate of Brenner. It

was at the time when France made war on the States of Barbary. Lennartson managed so with Brenner's connexions that he should take part in this campaign, and fitted him out at his own expense, though at that time he was anything but rich. Lennartson, in his plan, had rightly judged of his friend, and accomplished his salvation.

With strong natures there is only one step between despair and heroism. With a lock of Lennartson's hair upon his breast, and his image deeply stamped upon his soul, the young Brenner plunged forward upon a path on which dangers of every kind called him forth to combat. To him, there was more than the conquering of people and kingdoms; to *him*, there was the winning again of honour; the winning again the esteem of himself, of his friends, and of his fatherland. And with the most joyful mad-bravery, he ventured his life for that purpose. The young Swede divided dangers and laurels with the Frenchmen. And upon the wild sea waves, in battle before the walls of Algiers, in combats with Arabs and Kabyles on the soil of Africa, the French learned highly to esteem a bravery equal to their own (a greater is impossible), and to love a humanity towards vanquished foes, with which they are not so well acquainted.

Afterwards, Brenner accompanied some French learned men on their dangerous journey into the interior of Africa. After an absence of nearly seven

years, Brenner again saw his native land. Honour and esteem here met him. He soon found an opportunity of signalizing himself as a sea-officer, and was quickly advanced in the service.

The first use which Brenner made of the money that he obtained in service, was the payment of his debts at home. When he returned, he was no longer in debt—no! neither in money nor property. But one debt had he yet upon his soul, and this he longed to pay. He had left behind him during his absence a poor girl of noble mind, and of humble, though honest birth; whom he loved passionately, and who loved him equally as well. He swore solemnly to return to her, and to make her his wife. Years however went on. Only seldom flew a dove from burning Africa to misty Europe, to console the solitary heart. Poverty, care, and sickness, changed in the saddest manner the young blooming maiden. She knew it; was frightened at herself; and like the sick bird, which finds out a dark place in the wood in which to die, so did she retire far from the world, and determined to die for him whom she loved!

He sought her out, however, and found her. But he scarcely could have recognised her. He saw merely by the tone which at sight of him broke forth in her voice and in her look, that she was the same, and that she was true to him. He pressed her to his breast; he seized her hand in order to lead her to the altar. But she refused. Ah! she was so withered,

so poor, so joyless. She should only encumber his life; should only follow him like a shadow upon his sun-brightened path of life. She would rather remain in her obscurity. She could, notwithstanding, gladden herself in its shade with the beams which surrounded him.

Thus spoke she in the earnestness of a pure heart; and whilst he read this heart, she became to him yet dearer than before. And he talked to her of accompanying him to lands of more beautiful climate; talked to her of new flowers on foreign, lovely shores; of the fresh wind and fresh waves of the sea; of dangers which they could share with each other; of burdens which she could lighten to him; of the omnipotence of love; of a new life. She listened to him; it went so fresh through her soul; it bloomed anew in her heart, she believed, and—followed him.

And upon her cheeks, which sickness had paled, Brenner impressed his kisses, breathed the fresh sea air. They bloomed again. When, after an absence of two years in foreign countries, he came back with his wife, she bloomed with health and happiness.

On the occasion of Brenner's marriage were heard many voices of disapproval and opposition; others also raised themselves approvingly, and no one's was warmer than that of Lennartson.

He and Brenner were from this time forth inseparable in their lives-interests, and still love one another as brothers—but very seldom do love.

"Why have I not seen Brenner's wife here?" I asked from my stepmother, affected by the relation which I had heard.

"Why?" replied my stepmother, smiling and rather hurt—"for a very good reason. She has been dead three years. The birth of her youngest child, cost her her life."

I sate there somewhat astonished, and almost shocked. My stepmother spoke of the beautiful qualities of the late deceased, and rather prided herself that she (my stepmother) had taken her under her wing and introduced her into society, in which she otherwise would not easily have gained admittance, on which account Brenner always feels and shews an indescribable gratitude, and so on.

I inquired if he had mourned much for his wife?

"Almost to insanity," replied my stepmother. "For nearly a year he could scarcely bear the sight of his children. Now, however, they are his greatest delight. And sweet amiable children are they—three boys and two girls."

It had struck twelve o'clock during this history, which had awoke in me such beneficial feeling.

The Countess G—— had promised to bring Flora home to spend an hour with us herself, in order to relate to us the splendours of the ball, if we only would wait for her till three o'clock in the morning with warm coffee. My stepmother, who is charmed with every thing lively and gay, promised it; and

whilst Selma and I made giant steps in our Christmas-boxes, amid continued conversation about our two heroes, came unexpectedly the morning hour. Signora, Luna, and Flora came also, and now there was a zealous coffee-drinking and talk about the ball. The ball had been magnificent, and Flora one of its beaming stars; but—but it was with this magnificent ball as with so many others—it had been too hot, too much crowded. The ornamental quadrille in which Flora danced had had too little space in order to exhibit itself properly; the people who had to figure could not display themselves; people were almost overlooked, and had become mixed up with the crowd: in one word, they had not been amused.

"St. Orme among the gentlemen was the one who did most honour to his costume," said the Countess of G——, and added, "and was only somewhat too much of a Turk. Towards Flora in particular, he exercised a certain Sultan power. Perhaps," continued she archly, "the Gentleman Envoyé would thus hold all poor attachés in order."

Flora was the first who acknowledged the desire to go to rest; and whilst I went out to awake her sleeping maid, Anna, she ascended the steps which led to our chambers, Some time afterwards I also came up, and found her standing at the window of the corridor, looking thoughtfully out into the night illumined by feeble moonshine. As she did not appear to notice me, I touched her arm softly and asked,—

"Where are thy thoughts now, lovely mask?"

"Where?" answered the Circassian, with a strangely ringing voice, "Now! in the wilderness, where John nourished himself with locusts and clothed himself in camel's hair. Ah! to be there, far from the world, far from oneself!"

"Flora, you are"—— strange, I would have added, but Flora interrupted me and said,—

"Yes, what am I? I would really thank those who would tell me what I am. What I was—I know."

"And what were you?"

"A being gifted with the richest and most beautiful powers, which might have become——yet what is the use of speaking of that which I might have been? That which I shall become, begins to be tolerably clear to me."

"Certainly you may become whatever you really wish to be," said I.

Without seeming to regard these words, Flora continued bitterly, and full of thought—"Have you read in legends of people, who through evil magic-power have in one night been changed into Varwolves, and have taken upon themselves the evil nature of those who have bewitched them?"

"Yes," replied I; "but I have also read that the christian name of the bewitched spoken by a loving voice, has the power of dissolving the magic and saving the unhappy one."

"Who calls me thus? Who loves me thus? Nobody,

nobody!" exclaimed Flora; "and I do not deserve it. I am—not good! I am——but what matters it what I am. It will make nobody wise. Hate me as much as you can, Sophia. In so doing, you do the wisest thing. No! do not look so tragical. I laugh at myself, at you, and at the whole world."

Flora laughed, but not from her heart. Anna now came up.

"Will you not, for this once, let Anna go to rest, and accept me for your maid? I fancy I am not entirely without talent as——"

"No! my best Philosophia;" exclaimed Flora, laughing; "that I really cannot, although I curtsey low, and thank you for this proposal, so full of honour. Yet I would rather see my pins in Anna's hands than in yours, although she now looks like one of the seven sleeping virgins. Anna! do not fall upon the candle! You are the veriest nightcap in all Stockholm! Cannot you keep your eyes open for one quarter of an hour at night? Look at me! I have been awake the whole night, and I am still so lively."

"Yes, that I believe," replied Anna grimly; "the young lady has amused herself, and danced, but——"

"If that is all that is wanted, you may dance on before me, in order to waken you."

Thus talking vanished the young lady and her maid in Flora's chamber, and I went into mine. But it was long before I could sleep: Lennartson and his mother, the Viking and his wife, stood so livingly

before my soul; and then Flora, with her strange, capricious confession. Still in sleep it occupied me, and the beautiful Circassian, and Var-wolves, and locusts, made a strange confusion in my dreams.

The 21st.

A new revolution in Flora; a new light respecting Selma; with uncertain gleams respecting certain dark things. Signs of the times: conversation between my stepmother and me.

Felix Delphin's associates and friends; the gentlemen Rutschenfelt and Skutenhjelm, or the 'Rutschenfelts,' as they are called collectively, paid us, this morning, a rather unexpected visit, under the conduct of St. Orme and Felix. Their courteous errand was an invitation to a great sledging-party, whose originators they were, and which was to be on Sunday. Felix wished to drive Selma, and St. Orme invited Flora to his sledge. This was to be covered with tiger-skins, and would be drawn by fiery piebalds, which Flora had seen, and found much to her liking. This sledge was to lead the procession, which was to drive through the principal streets of the city to the park, where they were to dine, and after that were to dance, and so on.

Flora accepted the offer with evident delight, clapped her hands, and exclaimed, "Ah! I know nothing more divine than tiger-skins and fire-breathing horses! It will be a divinely-delightful drive!"

But Selma whispered suddenly to her, "Consent not, I pray you! Think on Lennartson!"

"Now, why then?" replied Flora, impatiently.

"He would not wish it. Defer at least a decided answer yet!"

"Ah! always difficulties and opposition when I wish any thing;" said Flora, stamping a little with her foot, and with the crimson of disquiet on her cheeks.

In the mean time Rutschenfelt had turned to my stepmother, and Skutenhjelm to me, with the offer of being our sledge-drivers. I looked at my stepmother, and my stepmother looked at me, and this time with unity of mind, since we both of us answered doubtfully, and prayed for time for consideration, before we could give a decided answer.

As we now all of us stood there undeterminedly and almost declining, the spirit of defiance entered Flora, and she said decidedly, "Others may do as they will, but I mean to go, and St. Orme has my promise."

"That is beautiful!" said he, "and I hope that the other ladies will follow so good an example. I will come this evening in order to receive the decided answer."

Scarcely was St. Orme gone, and the 'Rutschenfelts,' together with Felix, had rushed down stairs, when Lennartson entered. He soon was informed by my stepmother of that of which we spoke.

"What answer has Flora given?" asked he, short and hastily as he turned himself to her.

"I have promised to go with St. Orme," replied Flora, although evidently not with a good conscience —"I know not why I should refuse such an innocent pleasure."

"It grieves me, Flora," said Lennartson mildly, but gravely, "but I must beseech of you to give up this pleasure."

"It grieves me, Lennartson," said Flora insolently, "that I cannot follow your wishes. I have already given my promise to St. Orme, and my guardian will certainly not compel me to break my promise."

"In this case, I must require that you recal an over-hasty promise. I have my reasons for it, which I do not now wish to give. In one word, Flora shall not go with St. Orme!"

"Shall not!" cried Flora with flashing eyes, "and who can forbid me?"

"I!" said Lennartson, calmly but resolutely.

There was a time when I thought that I never could hear a man speak dictatorially to a woman without my heart mutinying in my breast with hatred and bitterness. But now at this moment, I heard such a mode of speaking and I was calm! I felt the whole force of a noble power.

Flora felt it also. She said nothing. She went quietly aside to a window. Lennartson talked for a good while with my stepmother and me, as if nothing had happened.

When I next looked at Flora she sate and sewed.

She was pale, grave, and as it were, changed. After a time, Lennartson went and seated himself directly opposite to her in the window. He took her half-reluctant hand, and his eyes sought hers. But she only looked down the more at her work. At once two bright tears rolled down upon it. Lennartson whispered 'Flora!'

She raised her head, and looked at him with eyes that beamed with love.

Lennartson looked at her seriously, and at the same time evidently affected.

"Flora!" said he again, "how am I to understand you?"

"Can you not have confidence in me; not have faith in me; although you do not understand me?" replied she.

He said nothing, but kissed her hand repeatedly. Again several words passed between them, which I did not hear. When Lennartson arose, tears were in his eyes also. He bowed silently to us, and went out.

Flora sate silent for a long time, her face concealed in her pocket-handkerchief. I fancied she was deeply affected. But all at once she raised her head and exclaimed, "Ah, I mourn so about the tiger-skins and the fiery horses. I should have driven as in a triumphal procession. I would have worn my bright red fur and my bonnet with the white feathers—that would have looked enchantingly beautiful!"

Selma looked at her with a half-wounded, half-

troubled glance, as if she would say to her, "how can you now think about such a thing?"

Flora observed it and exclaimed, "See! Selma, do not, direct yourself by Sophia; and at any little flights of mine, do not go and look like a litany. I cannot help my liking that which is splendid and beautiful. And some little pleasure will I have in this life if I am to live. Ah! a sunny, gay life is glorious. Take two cups, and pour into the one the bitter draught of renunciation, and into the other youth, strength, health, pleasure, joy,—and I would defy even you, wise Philosophia, not to grasp after the latter. O! I would that I could drink out the latter, drink it to the very lees."

"And would," said I, "find there just the bitterest portion of the draught which you have represented to be the contents of the first cup. For my part, I will have a better joy—than pleasure; a better draught of refreshment than amusement."

"Give me," exclaimed Flora, "amusement, enjoyment! Create for me pleasure, pleasure, pleasure; and after that—let me die! So speaks a candid person."

"But not so a reasonable one," said I, smiling.

"And who told you that I am a reasonable person?" exclaimed Flora, with vehemence, as she waltzed around a few times. "Perhaps I am not at all a person. Perhaps I am one of those beings who float between heaven and earth, without the

property of belonging to either of them, and which, therefore, dance upon the earth as bright will-o'-the-wisps. And—perhaps it is better so to dance, than like you and others, to grope over that about which nobody wants any certainty. Come, Selma dear, let us waltz. Play us something from Strauss, Sophia; the wilder the better."

I played, and the two young girls danced; and that was just now as good as talking rationally with Flora. And sometimes people dance themselves into quiet, sooner than one can reason them into it. At the bottom of all Flora's outbreaks lay an inward disquiet. The whole day she was in an overstrained changeable humour, and seemed purposely to avoid becoming quiet and rational.

In the afternoon St. Orme came, and at sight of him Flora drew herself together.

"How is it with our sledging-party?" was his first question.

Flora with assumed calmness besought him to excuse her, taking back her promise for this party. "An earlier promise—another engagement, which she had forgotten this morning, prevented her——"

St. Orme heard her excuses with a dark look, and a crafty smile upon his thin lips. He then approached her, and said with a low voice,—

"May one know what promise it is which prevents you from fulfilling the one which you made to me? But perhaps you have also now forgotten that?"

"That may be!" said Flora, with negligent pride.

"Such forgetfulness never occurs to me," said St. Orme, with a mild but expressive voice. "I have a good memory; and I can also prove it by that which I bear upon my breast." With these words he folded back his waistcoat a little, and I saw a somewhat shine, which appeared to me in the haste to be a red-coloured silken ribbon. But paler was the red than that upon Flora's cheeks. She clenched her hand convulsively, and exclaimed in a bitter tone, as she turned herself suddenly from St. Orme to me: "How happy men are! They can with arms in their hands demand right or revenge! Ah, that I were a man!"

"Would you then fight with me, my lovely cousin?" asked St. Orme, smiling. "Should we fight a duel?"

"Yes," cried Flora; "hotly, for life and death!"

"It is fortunate for me," continued St. Orme in a jesting tone, "that you are only a lady. And now I council you to use no other weapons against me than your beautiful eyes. To these I am ready to resign myself captive. Adieu Flora! Adieu Sophia! I wish you much pleasure this evening."

It was Abonnement's-day; and Flora and Selma were to go to the opera, with Mrs. Rittersvärd and her daughter, to my stepmother's box. My stepmother herself was a little wearied, and wished not to go; and I promised Selma that I, at all events,

should stay at home to keep her company, and to amuse her.

"And hear, thou sweet angel," whispered Selma archly before she went; "do not be too rigidly-christian in thy love of justice towards the Gyllenlöfs and the Silfverlings, in case the conversation turn upon them. Such 'spasmodic acquaintance' can bear a little bitterness and peppering."

I promised to be severe against them, and desired an explanation of the phrase 'spasmodic acquaintance;' but she asked, "is it possible not to understand it? O golden innocence!" And she ran away laughing at my ignorance.

Alone with my stepmother, I remarked that we, on both sides, were laden with strong material for a great conversation, and desired nothing better than to come together.

'It is extraordinary,' began we, both of us, as we seated ourselves by the evening lamp.—(N.B. We begin our political discourses always with 'it is extraordinary,' or 'it is wonderful,' or 'it is quite inconceivable;' or with a similar expression of excitement, as an introduction to observations on some questions of the day. And as my stepmother and I, in consequence of our different political tendencies, take in opposition newspapers, so it is of consequence to us to have met with any appropriate reflection or phrase therein, in order that we may startle one another, nay indeed, sometimes strike one another; but all in

the very best friendliness of course! This has been a horribly long parenthesis! Now I had exactly to-day read in my newspaper various remarkable facts on the progress of industry, and had appropriated to myself a strong phrase respecting this giant work. It was as an introduction to it that I began with 'it is remarkable.' And now at length is the parenthesis ended.)—When I heard my stepmother begin in the very same way as I had begun, I gave with due reverence the preference to her 'extraordinary fact;' and it shewed itself not to be the industrial spirit of the age, but it was 'some people, and their want of understanding and good feeling,' of which my stepmother had had to-day an extraordinary proof. I saw Count Gyllenlöfs coming; and they came too, and with them Silfverlings. We complained sadly of the first, on account of their want of good breeding, on account of their vanity and their haughtiness; and we made the others ridiculous, on account of their foppery and their gentility. 'The poor people!' they know no better. They are as pitiable as they are ridiculous, said we.

From them we went to other friends and acquaintance, and blew good and ill luck over the people. We added a little to the palsy of Mrs. Rittersvärd, and made it more apoplectic, and overturned a little the triumphal-chariot of 'the Beauty,' so as to help us in deciding the choice of Sparrsköld, between beauty and virtue; that is to say, Flora's sister, and Helfrid Rittersvärd.

My stepmother wished greatly, for the sake of her good friend Mrs. Rittersvärd, that the daughter might marry well, and Lieutenant Sparrsköld is a distinguished young man, and has good prospects; my stepmother, however, believes in the conquest of beauty, I hoped in the conquest of virtue, and we laid a wager upon it.

During all these arrangements for friends and relatives, I endeavoured, unobserved, to approach our own family, in order to hear the thoughts of my stepmother on the signs and movements which now were going on within it. I revealed also for that purpose, some of my remarks on St. Orme, Flora, and Lennartson, and on the strange relationship between them.

My stepmother listened with excited attention, and put some sudden questions; but instead of opening to me her views, she withdrew herself at once into the intrenchments of the mystery, and with a demeanour which would have been worthy of Prince Metternich himself, said, "You must be convinced, my dear Sophia, that I see every thing—see and hear perfectly every thing which goes on around me, although I say nothing, nor will meddle in the affair, before I——"

Here began the diplomatic water-gruel. I swallowed it, and a little vexation. Unexpectedly my stepmother turned towards me with remarks on me and my position in life, together with certain entrapping questions, as to whether I would not change it in case a suitable, good offer invited me—for example,

if an elderly, sedate man, of good character, respectability, property, education, and handsome establishment, should offer, and so on.

Mortified a little by my stepmother's omniscience and reserve, thinks I, "if my stepmother will enact Prince Metternich, then I can enact Prince Talleyrand;" and instead of replying to the inquiries of my stepmother, I began a warm panegyric on the freedom and emancipation of woman. My stepmother at this became very violent, and without understanding how and what I properly meant, opposed herself, with her utmost zeal, to all emancipation. I wished to explain, but she would—as I also in fact—only hear herself, and so we over-clamoured one another for a long time.

The return of the opera-going ladies interrupted us. They came accompanied by Lennartson, the young Sparrsköld, and Felix. Signora Luna and her '*caro sposo*' increased our evening party, who, after accounts of the opera, were drawn into the strife which was on foot between my stepmother and me. They agreed that it should be fought out during supper. It was done with veritable zeal. All spake on the subject with the exception of Selma. I had Åke Sparrsköld and Signora Luna on my side. The Rittersvärds and the Great Alexander ranged themselves on the side of my stepmother. The latter was much troubled; her eyes twinkled much when I mentioned Thorild, and quoted certain passages

which may be read in the fourth part of his collected works (page 84), and which certain gentlemen and certain ladies would do well a little to consider.

Lennartson for some time took merely a jesting part in the conversation, and amused himself with nullifying the arguments, right and left, by sallies of wit, mine in particular; at length, however, on my gravely demanding that he should understand me, he said some serious rectifying words on the subject; some of those words, of great understanding, which are more charming to hear than the most delicious music. I delighted myself—by storing them up against a future day of judgment. These words closed the discussion. Baron Alexander was, however, much less satisfied with the decision. I concluded this from his reply to his lady, when she proposed that he should invite Lennartson for one day in the week when she should have company. He replied with a gruff negative, and as she beseechingly represented.

"But my friend," he interrupted her peremptorily, "But my friend, I will not. It may be your place to propose things, but it is mine to decide. And now I have decided on this thing, and I will not hear another word."

The Countess G—— was silent; but a cloud passed over her countenance.

It is no wonder to me if she be a radical in the Emancipation question.

When we had separated for the night, Selma accompanied me (as she often does) with a light up to my chamber. There I reproached her jestingly for not having supported my motion this evening, and accused her of being altogether without any '*esprit de corps.*'

She denied laughingly the accusation, but said that for her part she had not felt yet the necessity of emancipation.

"I have," said she, "looked up to the people who ruled over me. You know how kind my mother is towards me; how she wishes only my happiness, and does every thing for it. And my father! Ah! how happy was I, that I could love him, obey him, direct myself in all things by him. And after his death"—She stopped suddenly and blushed. I continued, "Well? and after his death."

"Yes, then I became acquainted with another man, and looked up to him" . . .

"Aha!" thought I, and a light broke in upon me. "May I ask the name of the man?" said I, not without an arch look; "may I—name Lennartson?"

With great seriousness, but with a secret tremor of voice, Selma replied—

"I shall always be glad to have become acquainted, in him, with the noblest and best man on the earth. Might, O might Flora but make him happy! For me, I wish merely to be his sister, his friend, and to have the right to be near him, to serve him, to

contribute in any way to his happiness. May he be happy! may he be happy with Flora!"

"And then, my Selma, shall I not see thee happy with——

"With no, no husband!" interrupted Selma warmly; "but I have a mother, I have thee, Sophia! I will live for you, and for the others who are dear to me. It is so sweet to love! But now, my mother indeed thinks that I am quite bewitched here. Good-night, sweet, good, wise, dearest sister!"

She kissed me tenderly and joyfully, and I heard her singing Klärchen's song in Goethe's Egmont, as she went down stairs,

Glücklich allein ist die Seele die liebt.

The 23d.

Poor Felix! He loves Selma so warmly, and fears not being loved again. He is unhappy and dissatisfied with himself and with the whole world. He prays me to be to him friend and sister. How gladly will I! His warm heart and his confidence have softened me towards him; but—— but——!

The 24th.

I feel now more clearly, that I am here on a volcanic soil; a soil, which gnawing passions make at the same time interesting and dangerous. For who can tell what the explosion may turn out,—whether it may merely produce a beautiful atmospheric appearance, or desolate whole countries. Were not

my own heart already too much brought into play on my young sister's account, I should view these scenes of human life, and the enfolding of this, in some respects, puzzling connexion, with calmness, and also with pleasure.

Ah! it is good however, when the youthful time is over, and quieter years come. It is good when the wild combat of the feelings allays itself; good also that it has been, for it has—produced a world! And over it floats a new spirit with new life; the quiet spirit of thought, which lays coolingly its hand upon our hot brows, separates darkness from light, and says to the eye 'be clear,' and to life 'be calm.'

In the Evening.

What is this? Will the frenzy of love and romance which is in this family infect indeed the whole world? Or is it with certain mental dispositions, as with the nocturnal dance of the Scottish witches, who draw into their circle whatever comes near to them, and compel it—to dance with them? But no! In the name of free-will, it shall not become so! and for that reason I will—immediately, make confession to myself.

Full of the composing and gladdening thoughts which I had written down this morning, I went out to take a walk. I find great pleasure in rambling through Stockholm, and in looking about me on these occasions. How many various shapes of life move themselves in a large city! how many human pro-

pensities and gifts here have taken bodily shape and glance forth with peculiar, marked physiognomies! I find pleasure in observing these little worlds, and in thinking how they all strive forth towards the same sun, and may be brightened by it; I find pleasure in conversing with them, and in letting them answer me.

The Finnish national poem Kalevala, calls the radical words, the words with which the spirits and the being of nature rule each other, PRIMEVAL WORDS, and these words seem to be the PRIMEVAL-BEING of things themselves, the mystery of their inward life. Whenever they may be addressed or conjured in such words, they must answer, they must obey.

This has a deep, gladdening truth.

But one finds not when one will PRIMEVAL WORDS, (neither in the poem Kalevala, nor in actuality). One must be in a particular frame of mind. . . . .

This day was favourable in an especial manner for life and observation, for its changing play of shadow and light caused the various regions of the city to appear in a changeful and living manner.

More than ever was I captivated by the individual beauty of Stockholm; historical memories rose up like crowned spirits from the seven islands . . . . I seemed to hear the song of the Sagas in the winds, in the rushing of the waves on these shores, which good and evil deeds, which great actions and great sufferings, have stamped with their poetic seal.

Once saw I a chief-city without any towers, without any one building exceeding in beauty and size

the rest; all were equal, and people said, 'see here the image of a true social community.'

But no! thus appears it not. When a people come to the consciousness of its full life, its cities and its buildings will testify of it: there must the flaming spires of the temples ascend to the sky; there must columns of honour stand in memorial of great men; there must magnificent palaces (not private ones!) express the sense of greatness in a noble public spirit; there must the *beautiful* express in manifold forms the *good* in the life of the state.

But whither does my wandering pen conduct me? My feet led me this time southward, quite high up the mountain and then down to the strand, and into a boat, in order to come by it again to the North. I had just seen a man come out from a small house on the shore, where a pale elderly woman followed him with blessings to the door, and saw him now go with hasty steps down the stairs to the strand, where the boat lay. As I came down, he turned himself round, and with a joyful 'Ah!' and outstretched arms, helped me lightly into the boat, when he took his place at the helm. It was the Viking!

It pleased me to meet with him, especially as I remarked that his large brown eyes rested upon me with the same expression as they had done on the first evening of our acquaintance. I was warm from walking, the wind had played somewhat wildly with my hair, I knew that I was looking well and saw that

the Viking thought so also. A certain satisfaction in soul and body; the low dashing of the waves around me, the mild air, the rich spectacle round about, Brenner's presence,—all gave me a feeling of exalted life, and this caused me involuntarily to give expression to the thoughts and impressions which had animated and still animated me.

Brenner listened to me with evident sympathy and pleasure; but when I expressed my wish "that people still more and more would come to understand life by the light of reason and to live in bright thoughts," he shook his head, and said,—

"Science and philosophy cannot make people better, and contribute but little to their true happiness. The inclinations of the heart alone give to life fulness and worth. The pure atmosphere of thought appears to me like the air of Mont Blanc; one can see in it all the great stars and the clouds under one's feet, but one can scarcely breathe, and all life is soon extinguished from want of the breath of life."

I replied; "the life of thought excludes not the life of feeling, but rules it, and prevents its preponderance. Reason saves man from much suffering."

"Reason!" exclaimed the Viking; "I will know nothing of such reason as kills the best life of the soul, which prevents man from suffering. Without suffering life is not worth much."

I felt myself struck by this thought, and especially by the looks and the tone in which it was spoken, yet notwithstanding, I said,—

"There is so much irrational, aimless suffering; so much tormenting feeling, without rhyme or reason."

"Ah!" said Brenner; "much that appears irrational, is still at bottom good; if it be for nothing else than to slay the egotism which makes us so careful about ourselves, so calculating, so coldly-and-stiffly reasonable that it is——horrible. Feelings without rhyme or reason! They are precisely such as these which please me. Who, for example, speaks of a rational love? And yet love is the noblest feeling of life, its sublimest flower. I, for my part, never am rational—never was so—and never, I hope, shall be."

Smiling and well-pleased I combated his arguments, and would know nothing of any other than of a rational love; whereupon the Viking grew hot, but in a cheerful and good-humoured way.

When we lay to at Logården, and Brenner offered his hand to assist me out, he said, "Do not be angry with me on account of my want of reason, Miss Adelan! I will see whether I cannot improve."

"Perhaps we shall understand each other better for the future;" said I cheerfully, and with a friendly feeling.

"Thanks for the words! Yes, may we do so!" said the Viking, and pressed my hand.

What does all this denote? and why does it give me pleasure to please this man, whom I have known so short a time? No, Cousin Flora, it is not a passion for conquest, at least not a blameable one, and—

if it had been so for a moment, I would take care that it no longer remained so. For to wish to be agreeable to persons whom one finds agreeable, that is no sin, and no weakness; but a pleasing and becoming nature. It is the foundation of all that which makes social life charming and happy. But human love must not degenerate into ——

The 25th.

Worse and worse! Yesterday as we landed I expressed my delight at some hyacinths and jonquils which were carried past us. To-day these flowers diffuse their odour in my room. They were accompanied by a note from the Viking!

Good now! Flowers are the symbol of good-will and friendship. I will regard these as such.

The 29th.

The Baroness Bella B., the Beauty, and Helfrid Rittersvärd, paid us a visit. Afterwards, Åke Sparrsköld, Felix, and others. 'The Beauty' expatiated (quite *mal-à-propos*, methinks) on the unhappiness and disagreeableness of ugliness. She pities 'from her heart, plain people;' but they must at least know that they are plain, and must stop nicely at home, and not exhibit themselves out in the world, and in society, where they can awaken only disagreeable feelings.

I was provoked at this speech, which evidently was made with reference to Helfrid Rittersvärd, whose

calm, classical demeanour I admired at this moment. She only cast a quiet, patient look upon the cruel 'Beauty,' and said mildly, "As it is not plain people's fault that they are plain, it is excusable if they go among their fellow beings with the confidence that they will shew indulgence and kindness towards them; nay, precisely on account of their misfortune, if one must take the affair so seriously."

This was said with an indescribably noble expression, and I should have replied with warmth, had not young Sparrsköld anticipated me as he exclaimed,—

"I cannot understand the importance which certain people set upon outward beauty or plainness. I am of opinion that all true education, such at least as has a religious foundation, must infuse a noble calm, a wholesome coldness, an indifference, or whatever people may call it, towards such-like outward gifts, or the want of them. And who has not experienced of how little consequence they are in fact for the weal or woe of life? Who has not experienced how, on nearer acquaintance, plainness becomes beautified, and beauty loses its charm, exactly according to the quality of the heart and mind? And from this cause am I also of opinion, that the want of outward beauty never disquiets a noble nature, or will be regarded as a misfortune. It never can prevent people from being amiable and beloved in the highest degree. And we have daily proof of this."

I would have embraced the young man for these

words, which calling forth a look of vexation in the countenance of the Beauty, made her plain, whilst a joyful emotion diffused over Helfrid's countenance the splendour of beauty. Åke Sparrsköld had never appeared handsomer to me than at this moment. Later in the evening he sang. He had an extremely agreeable voice. I said so to Miss Rittersvärd; she agreed, but so shortly, that I might have fancied her to be cold, had I not observed by her look that her feelings were only too warm.

The 1st of December.

Visits and entertainment. Rutschenfelts and Co.; together with a conversation which turned upon Gyllenlöf's soirées, magnificent rooms and furniture, and such like; as well as on the delicate dinners of the new-married couple, the O——skölds. What wine! what delicacies! St. Orme gave the ton, and Felix and his friends joined in. Among these, a young Captain Rumler (Åke Sparrsköld's captain) distinguished himself, whom the other young gentlemen looked up to with a certain admiration and a certain envy. His domestic establishment was described as a pattern of comfort and elegance, was celebrated as a pattern of a bachelor's housekeeping. People spoke in particular of his sleeping-room, of his expensive toilet, and of his own portrait, which was hung up there over his own bed. (This seemed to me like a little idol-temple of self, and I felt at

that moment contempt mount up within me). Beyond this, his connoisseurship in the delicacies of the table was extolled.

He however politely yielded the palm in this to the Chamberlain, who accepted it modestly; as he confessed, that although in Sweden people were rather 'gourmand' than 'gourmet,' yet that he belonged to the latter class of people.

Felix agreed with him, that in roast veal there are only three pieces which are 'really eatable.' By degrees, they began to draw a picture of all that which was required in these days to make life comfortable. (Nevertheless I suspect, from what I know of certain connexions of Captain Rumler, that certain necessaries of this felicitous life were now omitted out of regard to the ladies who were present). Felix sighed deeply, in regard to the sum of money which the satisfying of all these wants demanded.

In the mean time, Lennartson was occupied in a distant part of the room in reading various newspapers; still I am convinced that he heard all that was spoken in the room. At length, rising and approaching the company, he smiled and exclaimed:

"Here is also a picture of human wants which is original. Will the gentlemen hear it?" And he read from a newspaper which he held in his hand the following article from Hernösand.*

"The learned mathematical lecturer Aurén died

* The capital city of Norland.

here during the past month,* at the age of eighty-one. He was the author of several learned works, and among these some on Biblical Chronology, which he published at his own expense. Notwithstanding he amassed out of his small salary, on which he lived and in his latter years divided with a curate, the sum of eight thousand rix dollars. This could not have been done without the most perfect self-denial of all worldly pleasures and comforts. To what extent he carried these sacrifices may be shewn by this, that his needy dwelling, even in the severest weather, was never warmed, nor was ever a candle lighted within it. When darkness came down, he lay on his bed, whilst his favourites the stars, which were to him sufficient company, furnished a subject for his thoughts, or, if the heavens were clear, for his observation. That he was not impelled hereto by a sordid selfishness, is proved as much by the support which during his life he privately extended to cases of necessity, as by the noble manner in which he has disposed of his property.

"Four thousand eight-hundred rix-dollars he has appropriated to two stipends. He has given a garden in the city to an old man, whose wife tenderly and carefully attended to him during the latter years of his life. The remainder of his property descends to his needy connexions."

After Lennartson had ended, a short silence ensued

* February 1842.

in the room. Selma's beaming eyes were directed to the reader, whilst the eyes of Felix rested upon her.

Now arose a light murmur:—"Well, yes! an anchorite, a hermit,—but one cannot live in this way if one lives in the world, if one will live with people."

"That I confess," answered Lennartson; "but it is a question whether the system of lecturer Aurén will not contribute more than the system which prevails here, towards the obtaining peace and happiness during a long life on earth."

"I would as soon die to-morrow morning," exclaimed Felix, "as live a long life without human happiness!"

"And I," cried Skutenhjelm, "would rather shoot myself through the head the day after to-morrow, than sentence myself to lie a tithe of the year in darkness and cold. If one is to be buried, it is better to be dead first."

"You forget," said Lennartson smiling, "that Aurén saw the stars beaming over him, and certainly found more pleasure from them than we from the waxlights in our drawing-rooms. And as concerns human happiness," continued he, as he looked at Felix, "I am sorry that a young man should not understand the pleasure which he has enjoyed—the pleasure of useful activity—the pleasure of—doing good."

There was in Lennartson's look and voice, some-

thing so serious as he spoke these last words, that Felix evidently was struck by them. The tears came to his eyes, he went away, took a book, and sate down at a table. Selma's eyes followed him evidently with deep sympathy. Lennartson observed her attentively.

Some time afterwards, as St. Orme was continuing the interrupted conversation with some gentlemen, and was relating to them various particulars of Paris life and its charms, Lennartson went to Selma, seated himself by her, and said gently, "was I too severe, Miss Selma?"

"O no!" replied she with animation, "there was so much justice in what you said, but—

"But what? What but?"

"I think that your words really grieved his heart, and——he thinks so much of you."

Lennartson said nothing; but after a while I saw him approach Felix, and lay his hand upon his shoulder.

Felix reddened deeply as he looked up, and with a look of sincere love met the glance of kindness which Lennartson directed to him.

"I have not seen you for a long time in my house, Felix," said Lennartson with friendliness. "Will not you dine with me to-morrow? I promise you," continued he pleasantly joking, "no O—sköldish dinner; but I promise also that neither shall you be treated with Aurénish household-fare. I confess that I myself should be but little satisfied therewith."

Felix accepted the invitation half-embarrassed and half-pleased.

After the guests were gone, we, particularly my stepmother and I, made our '*reflexions chrêtiennes et morales,*' on the Aurénish and St. Ormish ideas of life. I grew warm for the first. My stepmother poured cold water over my fire, and talked of 'exaltation, overstraining, and excess;' and said that one might be "yet very good if one lived like other people, took part in the pleasures of the world, and enjoyed its good things." My stepmother was for the motto of Queen Christina—'moderation' (which she herself, however, generally managed to forget). Flora was thoughtful, and said, "when I was a child, and in my early youth, I had sometimes such Aurénish and Pythagorian fancies; I dreamed of—but they soon taught me to laugh at such dreams, and to seek after other aims. Yet, perhaps, these were more of dreams, more of deceptions, than the first. Ah!" continued Flora, with a sudden burst of melancholy, "who can be born anew; who can again be a little child?"

She burst into tears. Selma threw her arms round her, and began to weep with her. My stepmother looked quite in consternation, and I reproached her jestingly with this '*lamentabile.*' Selma came over to my side, and so ended we the day, '*scherzando.*'

The 14th December.

We have passed some weeks in visiting the collections of works of art, academies, and various other public institutions of the capital. To many of these shall I often again return, for many of them have had great interest for me. And wherein indeed lies the worth of a solid education, if not thereby enabling us to understand and value every species of useful human activity; and in opening our eyes to life in all its affluence. It offers us also an extended life. I remarked too with pleasure, how willingly scientific men turn themselves to those in whom they perceive a real interest, and where they feel that they are understood.

Lennartson, who was our conductor in these visits, by his own great knowledge and by the art of inducing others to unfold theirs, increased our pleasure in the highest degree. And how highly esteemed and valued is he by all. Flora listened attentively to him, but seldom to another, and betrayed quite too great a desire to shine herself. Selma belongs to those who say not much themselves, but who understand much, and conceal much in their hearts. Lennartson and I listen attentively to every one of her remarks. They always contain something exciting, and often something suggestive. She has a beautiful and pure judgment. A good head, together with a good heart, is a glorious thing in a human being.

Now it is necessary to sit still; to be industrious,

75742

and to finish Christmas knick-knacks in two days. It is not my affair.

The 25th.

The Christmas-eve is over, with its Christmas knick-knacks, lights, and tarts. My stepmother, who thinks much of children, had invited here those of several of her acquaintance, and among them the children of the Viking. Selma had prepared many trifles for the little ones, which occasioned great delight; and we amused ourselves by contriving plays for them, in which Selma was just as much a child as any of the rest. Felix helped us with ready good-will, but Flora was out of humour, and would neither amuse herself nor others. Brenner's children are lively, sweet creatures, and it did one good to see their behaviour to the father. Rosine, the eldest, an eight-years-old girl, and the youngest boy, the little Adolf, pleased me much. The poor little fellow is somewhat lame in the hip. Was it now, 'mother's love,' which, as a professor, one of my friends, asserts, exists in all women, or a particular liking which drew me towards the little boy; but this is certain, that when I had set him on my knee, and he had looked up to me with a clear and joyous child's glance, I was involuntarily compelled in an actual feeling of love and longing, to embrace him protectingly, and to clasp him in my arms and to my breast. But as I saw that his father observed us with a look, as if he would have liked to have embraced us both, I became cooler

in my tenderness. And how the father must love the children! Did I not hear him say this evening, that one must, in choosing a wife, take into consideration the future children, and what father and mother one would give them. I could not do otherwise than for the most part concede the right to him in this respect.

The crown of the evening to me was my countryman Runeberg's beautiful little poem, 'The Christmas Eve,' which the Viking had brought with him, and read aloud with a pure and noble expression. He placed me again in my native land, in its wild natural scenery, amid its powerful, contented, and patient people.

My heart swelled. And now—it is church-time, and I shall go to church.

In the Evening.

The sun shone through a great eye into the chancel as I entered the church, and light smoke-clouds from the lights, which had been extinguished after the early sermon, floated through the rays of light upwards into the vaulted roof. It was beautiful. The church, although I came early, was so full of people that it was not possible for me to find a seat, especially as many strove for the same thing. After some vain attempts I took the resolve of standing during service, and found a safe place against a wall, near to women who were sitting, and girls who were stand-

ing, to whom I offered eau de Cologne. I was happy in my soul, and had never felt more congregational. As the organ broke forth with its mighty tones the blood rushed through my veins, and a gentle shudder passed through me as a single voice elevated itself, and strongly and softly sang of the highest wonder of the world—of the wonder of which the people even now, and now perhaps more than ever, speak with admiration—

A Virgin has conceived, and borne a son.

Now joined in the congregation, and I with them, with a full, overflowing heart. Scarcely had the song ended when I heard near my corner a tolerably harsh voice, which asked—

"Has Miss Adelan no seat?"

Is was the Viking; he was so kind as to compel me to take his seat at a little distance. I must do this for the sake of quiet in the church. Brenner remained then standing near me, and accompanied me home after the service.

At home, I found Flora in a stormy temper. She had headache from the screams of the children on the former evening; she knew no days so bad as Sundays, when one must be sad and religious. This whole day we should be alone, according to the regulation of my stepmother; on this day her domestics go to church, and are allowed to rest. Neither were we either invited out. What was one to do with the whole long day? One might gape oneself to death.

And to-morrow! Then it would be still worse with us. One should die of over-exertion. Then would a great fishing-net bring to us the whole populous relationship. A dozen and a half of uncles and aunts, every one of them turtles; and more than a score of cousins, all of the generation of haddocks. And one should be compelled to see these from noon-day till midnight; from noon-day till midnight one must be polite to them; and from noon-day till midnight one must amuse them. Ah! one should go distracted!'

Selma and I, and at last also Flora herself, were obliged to laugh at these desperate circumstances, and we made various propositions for boldly meeting them.

I proposed that we should all agree to be merry, and to fall into whatever Christmas joke we might be inspired with. But Selma met that with a slight shaking of the head, and with 'that will not do. Several of our gracious aunts are a little prim, and the Lord has given to me such a fund of joy, that certainly—were I to let this out before them—they would really think me crazy. Upon this my step-mother came and besought us to be 'tranquil;' all would go on well and easily; she was accustomed to such things. We should only not torment ourselves, but keep ourselves cheerful, and so on. Selma sighed, and began to sing a song. In the evening, she entertained her mother and me with reading to

us. Flora went early to bed, and this was a relief to us all.

The third Christmas-day.

The great fishing-bout is over, and we repose, well pleased, upon our laurels.

The dinner;—well! during dinner one can always live, even with forty persons. Good eating is good company, and puts people in good humour. A great loss was it that the Chamberlain did not come. We had reckoned upon his 'good stories,' as upon the pepper and salt of the dinner. But he has taste only for small select dinner-parties, and has no inclination to sacrifice himself.

Immediately after dinner they had coffee, which also is enlivening; but after this comes a heavy interval, namely, from coffee to tea-time. One is heavy from eating; heavy from the heat; heavy from the company of thirty heavy people; heavy from the duty of entertaining these. All this is not light. I know very well, however, that the person who looks most petrified, has in himself a living, enlightening spark, and that it only requires a fire-steel wherewith to strike this, in order to call it out; I have often experienced that with pleasure, and I began therefore now to go about in the company as a fire-steel; but it either was my fault, or the fault of the others, nowhere would it give fire, nay, not even smoke or crackle the least. True is it—and I said this for my comfort—that I was too little acquainted with most

of the present guests rightly to understand how to strike upon them. Flora gave herself not the least trouble about the company, but sate there with the most annoyed countenance in the world, and turned over a memorandum-book.

Selma moved with the most heartfelt politeness and kindness here and there in the company, and began now with one and now with another a conversation, and tried to make the people chat together, and wherever she turned herself, there her sweetness failed not to call forth a little life; but it soon died out again when she was gone. With one word, it would not succeed, but was ever stiller and stiller, hotter and heavier; and I remembered a witty Countess's description of a soirée in our highest '*haute volée*—" We were like fish in a fish-tank, which, on account of the heat, swim slowly about and wind about another, and only now and then move their gills a little."

Three or four card-tables had taken away a part of the gentlemen; but we had several, who neither played nor yet talked, and the whole mass of sitting ladies, and—these were to be entertained till twelve o'clock at night!

It was now somewhat after six. My stepmother sate on the sofa, and swallowed her yawns under the most polite gestures; but her look was more and more troubled, and her eye sought Selma, and asked intelligibly 'what are we to do?'

Selma came to me and whispered "this is horrible! In my despair I have just now related a little bit of scandal to my aunt Pendelfelt, but she looked with such a 'God defend us' air, that I took to flight. But now we must set on foot a revolution, in order to enliven us. Poor mamma looks as if she were ready to fly the field! Hast thou no little suggestion—no bright idea?"

"Yes, a splendid idea! We will introduce a Finland Christmas-game, with song and dance, which I remember. I will propose it."

"Ah! that will never do."

"It must do." And I lifted my voice, and proposed to the company to take part in a Christmas game.

I could see by the horrible and perfect stillness which followed my proposal, how bold it was, and my stepmother looked somewhat embarrassed on my account.

But I have a certain Finnish vein in me, which makes me with lively perseverance go through with whatever is begun with boldness. I renewed therefore my proposition, and turned myself particularly to some gentlemen and ladies in company, and explained to them the plan of the game, and besought them to take part. I found several, especially among the ladies, ready to fall into my scheme, but—it was so difficult!——"The game was to be accompanied with song, and they could not sing," and so on, with

a thousand difficulties; and the royal secretary, Krusenberg, whom I besought to open the dance with me, started back horrified, and exclaimed, 'No, heaven forbid, my gracious lady! Impossible that I can!'

It began to get darker before my eyes, as to how the affair was to be managed, when my fortunate star opened the door of the ante-room, and Signora Luna, the Baron, and Lieutenant Sparrsköld, entered.

"We are saved," whispered I to Selma, "if we can only excite them to interest themselves in our proposal."

"That will easily be done, I fancy," replied she. "I see Lennartson approach us, we will speak with him."

And when Lennartson came to us we told him our trouble, and I prayed him with my whole heart to help me in my daring undertaking. As long as I live shall I be thankful for the readiness and kindness with which he entered into the affair. There are actions in social life which shew as much goodness of soul and human love, as visiting the captives does.

I went with the Baron to Signora Luna to beg for her help; and now our horizon became perfectly bright, for she replied frankly and joyously that she would be 'more than willing' to lead this game, which she knew, and which she had often played in her childhood. And as the kindly-beaming

Mrs. Luna opened the dance with the Baron, and I followed on Sparrsköld's hand, up sprung the royal secretary Krusenberg to Selma, and prayed to dance with her; thus a great movement took place, a stirring and rising in the whole company, and the procession, as it turned out into the large ante-room, became greater and ever greater. My stepmother engaged the little Miss M., who had no partner; other ladies followed her example; grey-headed men and matrons joined; everybody was soon upon their legs, and the merry game in full progress, and jest and laughter flourished. My stepmother began to look quite happy.

It was a surprise to me when I saw among the dancers St. Orme, whose entrance I had not noticed, and discovered Flora, no longer the contrary, ill-humoured Flora, but, in the light of the newly-arrived gentleman's glances, a more and more joyous and charmingly beaming Flora.

The game was not properly a game of forfeits, but the Baron made it such, at the instigation of Signora Luna, who thought that the redeeming of the forfeits would be amusing. And as the dancing had continued some time, and it looked as if people begun to be a little tired, and a great number of forfeits were collected, 'Our lady' with the bright eyes, seated herself magnificently and solemnly in the middle of the circle, and said—

I burn, I burn, I glow, I glow,
Who owns this forfeit I would know?

One of the first who had to redeem a forfeit was the royal secretary Krusenberg. His penalty was to declaim something before the company, and as his talent in this art was well known, a general expectation was excited, which was all the more increased by the subtle countenance with which the young declamator proceeded to his work. He had often shewn during this game that he wished to produce an 'effect,' and now set about most properly to 'startle us.' He did this truly, but not in a pleasant way; for he began with great pathos to declaim—the Lord's Prayer.

With a flash of noble indignation in her eyes, Selma rose up, went to him and said, "Mr. Secretary Krusenberg, it were better that you never said the holy words, than that you spoke them here in that way."

The declamator looked somewhat confounded.

"Defend us! Miss Selma is severe to-day!" said he reddening, and added, while he endeavoured to look quite at his ease, "Well then, I must then seize upon something else;" and he began to read some French verses, but he did it not in any extraordinary manner: he was evidently out of tune from the little scene, and from the impression which it seemed to have made upon the company. I immediately looked at Lennartson, who stood a little out of the circle, and read in his eyes, which followed Selma, an expression of decided approbation and pleasure.

With highly-crimsoned cheeks, Selma seated herself by me, and after she had been for some time silent, she turned her lovely and once more gentle eyes to me, and asked,—

"Did I do wrong, Sophia?"

"You did very right," said I, as I pressed her hand.

"But I was certainly too violent, too severe?"

"No; but if you think so, say in a while a word of explanation to the young man."

"Yes, I have been thinking so myself," replied Selma.

An old gentleman, who during the game had distinguished himself by his cheerful participation and liveliness, came diffidently and seated himself near us, and said gaily,—

"It is quite pleasant to be made so cheerful here. When one becomes old and heavy, and all is still around one, then one feels oneself often so stupified, so deadened, that one is ready to think 'it is all over with thee, thou poor simpleton, over, quite over.' But if it happen that one becomes shook up or animated, then one can see that it is not quite so over. Nay, there is so much which can awaken anew in us and revive, that one must be as much pleased as one is amazed to think 'O that thou shouldst still be so young and so full of life.'"

Upon this I made the wise remark, that this might prove that in truth the soul preserves her entirely

fresh life, although during the evening twilight, as we call 'age,' it slumbers a while.

The old man smiled, and replied, "how lovely she is. It can really do good to an old heart to look at her, and also to talk with her."

As methought that these words were a little incongruous as an answer to my observation, I looked at the old gentleman with astonishment, and remarked that he had riveted his eyes with a bright expression upon Selma, who, in order to redeem a forfeit, was sentenced 'to stand a statue,' and who stood the test in the most charming manner. Whilst I now, together with my neighbour, silently observed her, I perceived St. Orme's voice. He had in his customary soft, almost sneaking manner, seated himself near me, whilst he, with an expression of melancholy very uncommon to him, said,—

"Do you remember my late wife——Virginia?"

"Yes," I replied; "she was one of the loveliest women that I have ever seen."

"Think you not that Selma has a resemblance to her—less in the features than in expression, and in the whole being; for example, in the proud and yet charming; in the union of the princess and sylph; in that which is in the highest sense MAIDENLY? And her voice! she often recals the voice—which is silent for ever."

Such words from St. Orme! I looked at him surprised, but he seemed to have forgotten me and

every thing around him, sunk silently in sorrowful remembrance.

Why have I felt myself from the beginning so much excited against St. Orme? Why have I not thought of seeking out the good in him? At this moment his whole being seemed to me ennobled.

Were but human beings always that which they are in their best moments, then should we know here already on earth a kingdom of heaven, of beauty, and goodness. But——!

The redeeming of the forfeits, in which song and dance were brought forward, lasted till supper.

After supper, I saw Selma slowly make her way to the window where Krusenberg stood. A little while afterwards, she came to me, and whispered joyfully—

"Now have I concluded peace with Krusenberg."

"And what said you to him?"

"I prayed him to pardon my warmth towards him, but said to him at the same time what a painful feeling he had occasioned me, and—in a word, I was friendly and candid towards him."

"Well, and what said he?"

"He—what do you mean? He thanked me and confessed his error, his thoughtlessness; nay, he charged himself with so many faults, that I was a little bit afraid of listening to him. But, Sophia, how much good there is in people."

"Yes, now! is not that my everlasting sermon? But one must also be careful to call it forth. As one calls into the wood, so is it answered back again."

And these were our *'faits et gestes,'* on this day, whose memorandum I may not however close, without adding to it the 'honourable mention' which, at the end of the day, my stepmother made of my good deportment, of my looks, and my toilet. The latter part lost itself in the following agreeable *'clair-obscure,'* "and in that dress—with thy beautiful white arms, and pearls in thy brown hair, and with all this, there—thou didst not look as if thou wert above twenty—and so *'distingué!'* and I assure thee, that more than one—um, um, um!"

I (modest and half curious to hear more).—"O my sweet mother!"

My Stepmother.—"Um! um! um! I say nothing, as long—um! um! um!" . . .

The 28th of December.

FRAGMENTS OF A CONVERSATION.

"But tell me, Selma, how shall I explain to myself Flora's position between Lennartson and St. Orme? She really loves the first, and is betrothed to him, and yet the latter has a wonderful power over her. And she—how unequal and strange she is towards him! Sometimes she appears coquetish, sometimes afraid of him; at times almost hostile, then again submissive, nay humble; then again proud—what indeed can be the ground of all this?"

Selma (with a sort of anxiety).—"Ah, ask me not! I know not, I understand not how that is; but this I

know, that Flora, since St. Orme's arrival, has been quite changed. Her temper has never been equal, and her lively imagination has always led her to fly from one object to another; but still she was in all so charming, so pleasant, so amiable."

I.—"How long has Lennartson been betrothed to Flora?"

Selma.—"Rather more than a year. It occurred at the death-bed of her mother. But I know not why, after that, her betrothal was not made known. Old General Lennartson about that time had a paralytic stroke, and his son went abroad with him in hopes of re-establishing his father's health. When Lennartson, a few months ago, returned alone, St. Orme was already here, and Flora changed. But she herself will neither speak of this, nor hear it spoken of. And truly this conduct which now prevails must soon change. It seems to me so unnatural. I hope much from the New-Year and its power. Do you see how Mathilde, between King Hiskia and Lord Wellington reddens already! And here King Ahasuerus begins to open his bright-blue eyes. How pleasant it will be to see all these in full bloom!"

Thus my young sister sought to escape from a subject which grieved her, and to forget amid bright pictures the dark ones. But the dark ones must not be so overlooked, they must be penetrated—made transparent if possible. I mean after this to keep my eyes well open.

The 1st of January, 18—

A bouquet of fresh flowers, and a cordial hand-pressure from the Viking——is the glad impression which I have derived from the forenoon visits.

In the Evening.

Ready-dressed for the Exchange Ball, in black, with lace; pearls in my hair, on my neck and arms.

Be quiet Selma, dear!——Thou shouldst not make me vain! Thou shouldst not mislead thy elder sister.

Flora goes with 'the Beauty' to the Exchange, and makes her toilet with her. I am not in good spirits, and I fancy that I shall have no pleasure. But still, however, a quiet observer need not experience any annoyance, when she herself will not play any part. It is now more than ten years since I saw the world in a New-Year's Assembly in Stockholm. How will it now appear to me? '*Allons et voyons!*'

The 2nd.

Let us now relate something of the Exchange Ball. When we entered the large, magnificently-lighted saloon (we came rather late), the upper, that is to say, the aristocratic part, was filled. My step-mother nevertheless steered our way there, and said cheerfully to us, 'O we certainly shall find seats!' But the 'honourables' sate like stone-houses on their seats; and at Selma's earnest and whispered prayers her mother desisted from all attempts to unsettle

these ladies. Thus we described, with all dignity, a half-circle; and amid the most courteous greetings, we made our retreat towards the lower regions of the saloon, where we obtained places near the door. Now entered Count Gyllenlöf's brilliant group, accompanied by the Silfverling family. As they paused for a moment at the entrance, in order to obtain a view of the saloon, my stepmother arose to speak to the Countess, but she turned herself away with a short and cold salutation, and then floated past us with her splendid train, which seemed not to observe us the very least in the world. My stepmother seated herself, evidently mortified and wounded. Selma was so too, for her mother's sake, and said in a tone of vexation, "How stupid they are!"

A comet-like appearance now suddenly moved through the room. It was Flora and her sister, accompanied by gentlemen. They were both of them dazzlingly beautiful, and dressed with the utmost elegance. Flora nodded gaily to us, and followed her sister up the room, where they found places near the Gyllenlöfs, who had taken seats near the platform, which was arranged for the royal family. Selma looked after Flora, and tears came involuntarily into her eyes. We sate tolerably forlorn, among quite unknown people. My stepmother looked quite troubled, and I felt myself really depressed for her sake. Then my young sister took heart, and began to introduce to me, in her lively manner, those who

were arriving and those who had already arrived. My stepmother on this cheered up, and was challenged by me to shew now also her great knowledge of the world and of mankind.

In the mean time we fell into discourse with a charming young girl, who appeared very zealous to learn something of the great world about her, which she now saw for the first time. This charming young person amused us with her liveliness, and the naïve candour with which she communicated to us her great fear that this evening she should not dance a single dance, as she had scarcely any acquaintance here, and besides this, was so strange and so bashful in the world, and so on. She would however console herself for sitting the whole evening, if she could only see the royal family; but somebody had just now told her that perhaps they might not be at the ball. And she had promised her little sisters to wake them when she came home, and tell them about the princess and the young princes. Her fear was soon changed into the most lively delight, as the royal chamberlains shewed themselves, and everybody in the saloon rose to salute the Queen, who, with the Crown-prince, the Crown-princess, and the two eldest princes, Carl and Gustav, accompanied by a brilliant train, entered the saloon, and amid kindly greetings went across the room, to take their seats on the platform. And now we rejoiced ourselves, Selma and I, to have been near the door, where we could observe the royal family so well.

Selma's new little friend was quite charmed, and gave her heart immediately to the Prince Gustav; whilst Selma said, jestingly, that she had chosen Prince Carl for the favourite of her heart.

Scarcely had the royal family seated themselves, when Ulfe Gyllenlöf's party fell into conversation with the royal attendants. Young Silfverling paid attentions to the young ladies of the court.

Slowly now began the quadrille to form itself at the upper end of the saloon. The royal chamberlains had gone round, and given out gracious invitations in the name of the illustrious guests. Now the Crown-princess, majestic and glittering with jewels, was seen to open the quadrille with Baker N., a little, stout old man, whose good-tempered polite behaviour shews how easily true moral education effaces every distinction in all, even in the greatest difference of ranks.

The Crown-prince danced with a young lady of the citizen class; and Prince Carl with ——, our little new friend, who had feared so much that this evening she should not dance at all, and who now, on the hand of the young prince, beamed with the charm of youth and innocent lovely delight.

She was pointed out as the eldest daughter of the wholesale dealer M——. In my own mind I saw her thinking, 'what will my sisters say to this?'

Lennartson danced with Flora, Selma with Felix Delphin; and as I now saw my stepmother again

more satisfied and drawn into conversation by a lady of condition, I began to use more freely my eyes and ears, that I might seize upon and collect whatever the occasion offered.

The ball was beautiful; the world, thought I, tolerably like what I had seen it almost a dozen years before; old acquaintance were, for the most part, like themselves also. Time had merely wandered with light footsteps over most countenances, and had dug in a few wrinkles. Upon two faces only with which I was acquainted, I saw written a marked history—a development; the one for good, and the other for bad. For the rest, I saw many agreeable forms among the young of both sexes. People say that ugliness and stupidity vanish more and more out of the world. Good luck to the journey!

To the right of me I heard the two young Bravanders in quiet conversation together, and heard one of them say,—

"No! a thousand devils take and broil me——"

And the other replied,—

"O! the devil fetch me! the devil in hell fetch me!"

And the first continued,—

"No, seven thousand tuns curse my soul!"

And the other chimed in,—

"Yes, the devil fetch and govern me!"

An old, well-dressed gentleman, with a somewhat

sarcastic look, now came up to the speakers, and wished them, with a smile, 'good speed.'

On my left hand I heard Hilda and Tilda Engel talking about the gentlemen who had just been conversing, thus. Hilda said,—

"Ah! he is so sweet, Axel Bravander, with his handsome eyes and his little pointed beard. Heavens! how sweet he is!"

Tilda. "And his brother there! he is according to my taste no less sweet. And how he waltzes! Quite divine! He has engaged me for the second waltz! Ah! he is such a sweet fellow!"

Hilda and Tilda together. "Ah, they are so sweet, so sweet, so sweet!"

Oh! thought I, we have not yet got rid of the ugly and the stupid!

I was interrupted in my observations by a middle-aged lady of a lively and goodly exterior, who saluted me with a friendly zeal, and taking my hand, exclaimed,—

"Ah! my best Mada—Miss—Mrs.—pardon me; I have forgotten the title. I wish you a good new year! How charming it is to see Mada—Miss—home again. And how may be the sweet Lady-District-Governess—I mean Miss—I mean your Honour's Lady stepmother?" I was concious that I very well knew the person who thus addressed me, but I could not at the moment recal to mind either her name or rank, and therefore in consequence of the incompre-

hensible etiquette of our social intercourse, I found it impossible to address her as *you* or *she*. I was therefore in the greatest perplexity, as she seemed so certain of our perfect acquaintance. Whilst I secretly vexed myself about this defect and bad custom among us, I seized upon, as it seemed to me, the brilliant idea of calling my unknown acquaintance 'Your honour.' At this she looked somewhat confounded, and our conversation fell, as it were, to the ground, till the Signora Luna, who had now finished her attendance on the Queen, came to us, and after having given me a hearty shake of the hand, addressed my great personage thus: "Ah, good day to you, Provostess R.! A good new year to you! How is the Provost?"

"I thank you my gracious Barone—or Countess, who are so good as to ask. I hope the Baro—I would say Count—pardon me, I am so unlucky as never to remember titles and names. Is it not Countess that I should say?"

"Could we not simply address one another as *you?*" asked Signora Luna, smiling, "we then should get rid of a deal of embarrassment; and, as you know, Kellgren says, 'the simpler the better.'"

"Ah, if that could but be!" exclaimed the Provostess, brightening up, "that would really be a blessed thing! For me especially, who have so wretched a memory and am so mortified to be discourteous. But could one really do so?"

"I see nothing in the world which can hinder it," answered 'our lady of the bright eyes,' "if we, the Provostesses, the Baronesses, the Countesses, and ladies of all degrees, determined to carry it through. For you know, indeed, that God wills what the women will. Is it not so, my best Chief Master of the Ceremonies?" continued she, turning herself to the ornate old gentleman just mentioned, "does it not seem to you, Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies, that Mr., the Chief Master of the Ceremonies himself, and we all should have an easier life of it here in Sweden, if we, like all polished nations, availed ourselves of the manner of addressing one another which our language offers us; if we employed our honest Swedish *you*, instead of these everlasting titles? It actually frightens me from talking with the 'Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies,' when I bethink me that I must address Mr. the Chief Master of the Ceremonies with the title of Mr. the Chief Master of the Ceremonies, and that it can return every minute and hinders all that which these Masters of the Ceremonies ought to do for my tongue and my meaning. And now I promise to talk no more with a Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies, unless the Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies gives me leave to address the Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies with a simple *you*, and that I can hear the Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies address me in the same style."

"You are perfectly right, my gracious one,"

smilingly replied the polite old gentleman, "and if you can make your proposition general amongst mankind, you will have rendered a great service to Sweden. I really cannot conceive why at Court and in society we should be less European than in the Swedish academy, where we with the greatest freedom address each other with *you*, a word which is of equally good tone and has an equally fine sound as the Frenchman's *vous*, the Englishman's *you*, the German's *sie*, and the *de* of our Scandinavian brothers."

"That is excellent!" exclaimed Signora Luna. "Thus then we make a contract on this New Year's-day to introduce *you* into our social and every-day life, and a new and better time shall thereby arrive, both for speech and writing in Sweden. Let me now present to you these two ladies, my very good friends; I do not tell you whether they be ladies or Mrs. only, but that they are very charming people, and you shall address them with *you*, and they shall address you with *you* likewise. Now I leave you to make a nearer relationship through pro and con."

And we talked together, and it went off both easily and well. The nimble and the light in our new nomenclature, as it were, gave wings to the conversation, and I found the Chief Master of the Ceremonies one of the most interesting old gentlemen and the Provostess one of the most excellent and most lively Provostesses in the world.

The dancing in the mean time went on, but as is

usual at these New-year assemblies, without any particular life. People collect here rather to see and be seen; rather to greet one another with 'a happy New Year!' and to chatter with one another, rather than to dance. Towards eleven the royal party went out into the large ante-room on the right, to receive and to reply to the compliments of the diplomatic corps. When they again entered the saloon they began to make the great round of it, and I actually pitied them for the many unmeaning words which they must address to and hear from the many hundreds of people unknown to them. Yet the procession was beautiful and splendid to look at. The gorgeous dress of the Queen (she was almost covered with jewels) and her courteous demeanour occasioned deep bows and curtseys; people looked up with so much pleasure to the high and noble figures of the Crown-princess and her husband, and nobody noticed without joy and hope, the two young tall-grown slender princes; the one so brown and manly, the other fair and mild, and both with the bloom of unspoiled youth upon their fresh countenances.

My eye, however, riveted itself especially upon the Crown-princess. I remember so well, how I saw her twenty years ago make her entry as bride into Stockholm; how I saw her sitting in the gilded coach with transparent glass windows; the delicate figure in a dress of silver gauze, a crown of jewels on her head, with cheeks so rosy and eyes so heavenly blue,

so beaming, greeting the people who filled the streets and houses, and thronged themselves around her carriage, and with an unceasing peel of shouted huzzas saluted in her the young lovely hope of the country. She was the sun of all eyes, and the sun of heaven looked out in pomp above her. Certainly, the heart of the young princess must have beaten high at this universal homage of love and joy—at this triumphal procession into the country—into the hearts of the people. Life has not many moments of such intense splendour.

Signora Luna has told me, that when towards the end of the procession through the city, the princely bride came before the royal castle, and the carriage drove thundering through the high arched gateway, she suddenly bowed her head. When she raised it again her eyes were full of tears—with still devotion entered she her future habitation.

I thought of all this as the royal train approached us by degrees. I thought how the hopes which the young princess had then awakened, were fulfilled; how her life since then had passed; thought how she had worked on in quiet greatness, as wife and mother —as the protectress of noble manners—as the promoter of industry—as the helper of the poor and suffering; as she now stood there an honour to her religion, to the land where she was born—to the people who now called her theirs,—and I loved and honoured her from the depths of my heart. I thought

that I saw in her large expressive eyes that she felt the annoyance of the empty speeches which she had to make and to hear, and it seemed to me absurd, that merely for the sake of etiquette, that not one cordial word should this evening reach her ear. I therefore let my heart emancipate itself, and greeted her with a 'God bless your Highness!' The large eyes looked at me with some amazement, which however now took a colouring of friendship, as she pleasantly greeting us, past by and paused at Selma, whom she knew, and with whom she spoke with the utmost familiarity for some time, pleased, as it seemed, with the graceful and easy manner of my young sister. The Queen and my stepmother spoke French together, as if they had been youthful acquaintance. The Crown-prince talked with Lennartson, who now for some time had joined himself to us. All this produced a somewhat important halt of the royal train, and its delay with us drew all eyes, with a certain curiosity, upon us. Scarcely had the royal party left us when the Gyllenlöfs, as if struck by a sudden light, hastened up to us with the warmest friendship, and invited us at last to join their party. Seats were procured for us near the platform; we must of necessity follow them up the saloon. My stepmother, always soon reconciled, allowed herself to be persuaded; we went—we arrived—the Silfverlings found us to be their equals, and we had seats. My stepmother had a deal of politeness and many welcomes to answer.

Selma declined three invitations to dance with the young Silfverlings, and I now understood what she meant by spasmodic acquaintances.

Shortly afterwards, when the royal party had left the assembly, we left it also. The unfortunate philosopher had forgotten Flora's over-shoes, at which Flora was very angry and unhappy. Selma prayed her warmly to take hers, and Flora did so after some opposition. Lennartson seemed hurt and displeased at this; my stepmother uneasy. Contrary to all my prayers, I could not induce Selma to make use of mine.

We were kept for a good while standing in the lobby by the crush of people. Lennartson threw his cloak before Selma's feet, and obliged her to set them upon it, that she might not suffer from standing upon the cold floor. His anxiety called forth the hateful, envious expression into Flora's eyes. St. Orme observed her quite calmly, whilst he shewed himself very polite towards her. He gave her his arm, Lennartson conducted my stepmother, the Chamberlain me. Here came we in collision with Aunt Pendelfelt who, in an affected and formal manner, said half-aloud to Flora,—

"Now, my sweet friend, when may one congratulate you, if I may ask?"

Flora assumed an astonished and unfriendly look—but St. Orme answered laughing; "quite certainly in the next new year!" Lennartson on this, looked

at him with an inquiring and sharp glance. St. Orme looked another way. Flora seemed to set her teeth together. Aunt Pendelfelt turned herself now to Selma and Felix, as it seemed, with a similar question, which Selma sought earnestly to avoid, and begged Felix to go forward. At that moment the throng of people opened itself, and we were at liberty. In the carriage, my stepmother and I emulated each other in wrapping Selma's feet up in our shawls and cloaks.

At home, and during a light supper, we were all again in good humour, and amused ourselves with projecting all kinds of improbable plans for the future. We laughed a deal; but at a whisper of St. Orme's, Flora became suddenly gloomy and grave. At the same time I was aware of telegraphic signs between my uncle and my stepmother, which put me somewhat out of temper, and as we were about to part on this first day of the year, several of us were something out of humour; but Selma, good and joyous, and full of joke, prevented all vexatious stiffness, and amid merry 'happy wishes,' we said to each other 'good night!'

And thus is it in our life,—in our home here in the North we live much with, and among one another, where not unfrequently the unfriendly is excited, we are disturbed and put into 'ill humour,' and must endeavour again to heal this at home and in ourselves; since we do not here find this out of ourselves,

as in the rich South. Therefore it is so beautiful, when a tone of love and joy goes through the house like a key-note. Then the dissonances die away by degrees, and we can say in peace to one another and to life—'Good night!'

The 7th.

Good morning, life! A lovely, bright day; snow lies upon the southern mountains, and shines dazzlingly white against the clear blue horizon. Yet it is not very cold, and the sun bathes with a flood of light, palaces and cottages, waves and shore, men, animals, and statues. Sea-swallows, shining white, swing themselves over the Nordstream, where the water of the lake, with its thirteen hundred islands, breaks into the salt sea, and foamingly intermingles with its waters.

This stream plays a part in my life. Its roaring is my cradle song of an evening, when I rest upon my bed. In the morning it affords me my bathing water, and, by its wild fresh odour, by its strengthening cold, awakens feelings of the life by the Kautua stream; feelings fresh with youth, full of life's enjoyment. In its voyaging waves I see the first glimmer of light, when I from my window salute the new day.

Light! water! these primeval gifts of the Creator to earth, which still to-day are here for all mankind. —Why do we not acknowledge more your power of blessing? Why are we not baptized every day by you to new life, and courage, and gratitude?

I have stood at my open window, and with full respiration have drunk in the fresh air, which, together with the sunshine, streams into my chamber. I have had joyful thoughts.

I remember the Polish nobles, who in the past summer visited Sweden, and what was their peculiar feeling of esteem for this country.

'A country never conquered by a foreign power; a people who through their own strength have asserted their own independence!' said they, with an expression of pleasure and melancholy (melancholy over their own poor fatherland). And I softly sang from Malmström's beautiful warm song 'The Fatherland,' words which often come into my thoughts, and sang them with love.

Thou poor, thou sterile Swedish earth,
Shall famine cast thee down?
* * * *
Thou honour-crowned Fatherland,
Where old sea-marks abide;
Thou lofty cliff-encircled strand,
Washed by the faithful tide.—
Thou joyous home, thou peaceful shore,
God stretched in love and pleasure o'er
Thee his Almighty hand!

I thought also on my own, now so happy independence. O freedom! how charming is the enjoyment of thee after long years of captivity.

Thus thought I on something which is dear to me, and which remains ever more sure. I feel that I am come into an ever-improving; a more and more har-

monious relationship to my fellow-creatures. Since it has become light in my own soul, and I am by this means come more 'into equipoise' in life; since I am at peace with myself; no longer hotly wishing to please others, and no longer seeking so much for their approbation and their love—since that time I please them much more, and find in them much greater pleasure. Since I have, above all things, seen both in man and woman——human kind, and to this have spoken, I have towards mankind, and mankind has towards me, a certain *thou* affinity of feeling, a certain relationship, as of the children of one parent, which has opened our souls to each other, and has beautified life. In one word, I acknowledge ever more intelligibly that human love is my proposition.

Two people come in this way nearer and nearer to my heart, Selma and Wilhelm Brenner, my young sister and——my friend. Selma makes me happy by her tenderness, by her joyous harmonious being. She has at once laid aside the scornful mask, which disfigured her pure features, and her natural wit appears to me on that account only the more agreeable. Satire may play even upon the lips of an angel, and even the merry and witty may be handmaids in the house of our Lord. Does He not let this be seen in nature? Scatters He not over field and wave, among clouds and stars, millions of joyful sallies and rich bursts of laughter, which lighten

forth both in sunny and gloomy hours, and enliven the spirits of his creatures?

Wilhelm Brenner, the Viking——why do I feel at thoughts of him as it were a sunshine in my heart? Love, however, it is not, that I know decidedly; but my acquaintance with him gives me joy.

Latterly I have often seen him, and feel myself always well in mood when I am near him. I talk to him willingly of my Finnish fatherland; of the wild natural characteristics of Aura; of its peculiar people and manners; its strange mythological songs and legends, with magic arts and powerful PRIMEVAL WORDS—the keys to the being of things—of my own first childhood on its foaming pearl-rich streams, in the shade of its alders.

How kindly, nay, how willingly he listens to me; how well he replies to my thoughts, my feelings—now seriously, now gently jesting! Many times I request that he should call forth some remembrances out of his restless life, pictures of another climate, of seas and wildernesses, of glowing Africa and strange Egypt; scenes from the battle-fields around Atlas. It is rare that he will relate anything of this; but how curiously and desiringly do I not then listen! These pictures are so grand, and, I acknowledge, something grand also in the nature which has conceived them.

And what feeling is it indeed which leads the Viking to seek so openly and so cordially intercourse

with me? Love? No! I do not think so; and will not think so; at least not in the sense in which people generally accept this word. The tolerably current pretence, that man and woman only under the influence of this feeling approach one another cordially, is not just. They seek, they need one another because they admire a peculiar kind of excellence in each other. He finds in her the inspirations of life, she sees her world illuminated in him; and thus they find, through one another, the harmony of life, the fulness of life.

This I have thought to-day by my clear heaven, by my clear, fresh air.

The horizon of the family has exhibited itself to the New Year pretty free from clouds. My stepmother is entirely in good humour amid a host of New-year's visits, which drop in every day. This has prevented her and me from clashing together in any important quarrel; yet since the emancipation-question we have been rather more ceremonious towards each other, and my stepmother seems to suspect tricks and uneasy machinations under many of my entirely innocent assertions.

The 11*th.*

St. Orme comes hither sometimes early in the morning, and desires to speak alone with my stepmother. She always looks disturbed at this; and when she returns from these conferences, she is

always annoyed and uneasy till some new impression removes this. I suspect that their private conversations have reference to money which St. Orme borrows. May the goodnature of my stepmother not bring her into embarrassment. I have heard that which is bad spoken of St. Orme's affairs, of his life and connexions. Felix also may be misled by St. Orme's sophisms, and by the example of his friends, the Rutchenfelts, into evil ways. I have spoken with Brenner of my suspicions respecting St. Orme; but the Viking takes the field for him, and is, since his residence in Paris, under obligations to him, which makes him unwilling to believe anything bad of him.

The 13th.

My bad suspicions have their entirely good, or I will say, bad foundation. Helfrid Rittersvärd wrote a note to Selma this morning, wherein she asked a loan of fifty rix-dollars. She needed this sum, in order to pay the pension of her youngest brother, and should be able to repay it in two months. With eyes flashing with desire to gratify Helfrid's wish, Selma shewed the letter to her mother, and prayed her to advance the desired sum, which she had not now herself.

"With infinite pleasure, my beloved child!" exclaimed my stepmother, who is always ready to give; hastened to her writing-desk, and opened the drawer where she usually keeps money; but suddenly she

appeared to recollect something, and turned pale. She took out a purse, which a few days before was full of heavy silver-pieces, put in her hand instinctively, but drew out merely a few rix-dollars. A painful confusion painted itself on her countenance, as she said, almost stammering, "Ah! I have not—I cannot now! St. Orme has borrowed all my money. He promised to bring it me back again in a few days, but—in the mean time—how shall we manage it?"

My stepmother had tears in her eyes; and her troubled appearance, her pale cheeks—I sprang immediately up to my chamber, and came down again quickly with a few *canary-birds* (so my stepmother and Selma in their merry way, call the large yellow bank-bills; whilst the others, just according to their look and their value, have the names of other birds).

Selma embraced me, and danced for joy at the sight of the yellow notes. But my stepmother took them with a kind of embarrassment—a dissatisfied condescension, which somewhat grieved me. She promised that I should soon receive back the bills. And if I "must borrow from her, I might be sure that," and so on.

Her coldness cooled me. In the mean time we governed the state together in the afternoon, and handled 'the system,' and other important things, I will not venture to say exactly according to what system if not—according to the system of confusion. My thoughts were in another direction. They fol-

lowed Felix and Selma. He seemed to wish to speak to her alone, and she seemed on the contrary to wish to avoid him, in which also she succeeded.

The 15th.

To-day, Felix came hither early in the forenoon. I was alone with Selma, in the inner ante-room. She was attending to her flowers at the window. After a conversation of a few minutes with me, Felix approached her. Selma went to the other window; Felix followed. Selma would have escaped into the other room, when Felix placing himself in the doorway, barred her progress and exclaimed beseechingly,

"No! now Selma can no longer avoid me! Give me a moment's conversation, if you do not wish that I should be altogether desperate."

A deep crimson overspread Selma's countenance; a feeling of anguish seemed to seize upon her soul! but she struggled with herself, and whilst she looked down at a monthly rose, which she held in her hand, she seemed to wait for that which Felix had to say to her. I thought I saw that I ought to go, and leave the two young people to explain themselves to each other, and—I went, but not without secret disquiet.

In the saloon I found my stepmother in secret conference with the Chamberlain. She looked more Metternich-like than ever. I made as though I noticed nothing, and went up to my chamber, when I soon received a visit from Helfrid Rittersvärd. And

out of this visit came quite unexpectedly a confidence which——Now, now, my gracious diplomatic Lady Stepmother, I can also have my state secrets. To my Diary, however, I can very well confide, that Helfrid Rittersvärd, after much consideration and after much anxiety and pain, had yielded to the faithful devotion and prayers of Åke Sparrsköld, and had promised to belong to him whenever their personal circumstances allow of a union. This may, it is true, withdraw itself to a great distance. Before Sparrsköld gets his company it is not to be thought of, and Captain Rumler, his superior, remains probably yet a long time in his post as head of the company.

Helfrid was uneasy, and wished to know from me whether she had done well or ill. I said 'well,' and that made her happy.

It was two hours before I could again visit Selma. As I came into the ante-room where I had left her, it was empty, but I saw that some one had lain upon the sofa, and had supported their head upon the soft pillow. I picked up a few fallen rose-leaves, and saw in their bright-red bosom shining tears. Uneasy in mind, I went farther and sought for Selma. I found her in her chamber.

Her eyes gleamed as they are wont to do when she weeps, and sighs heaved her breast. She soon opened her heart to my tenderly-anxious questions, and I learned her secret feelings and thoughts.

Felix had reproached Selma with the coolness and

unfriendliness which she had shewn to him for some time; had told her that this made him unhappy, that he should be lost if she were not different towards him. He confessed his weakness of character—his folly—but Selma could save him if she would, could make of him a worthy, happy man. He prayed that she would confer her hand upon him, and make that reality at which they had so long played. As Selma's husband Felix would be quite another kind of person. "Ah!" continued Selma, "he spoke so beautifully and so warmly of that which I might be to him, and of what he himself could and would be, that I had not the heart to withstand his prayers and promises. But I set fast a time of trial for him, after which——I have always liked Felix; he has good a heart, and so many amiable qualities; but he is weak, and for some years, since he has been of age, he has shewn himself so trifling, so little to be trusted!—We have been so dissatisfied with him. But he can change, he can become better, and then——"

"Then you will make him happy, Selma?"

"Yes!"

"And you weep?"

"Yes! I know not why."

"I do not believe it of Felix, that he would, as it were, take your feelings by storm."

"Oh, that he certainly will not. But he thinks, perhaps, that I love him more than I really do; and that only temper in me, or his fickle behaviour occa-

sioned my coolness. From our childhood upwards it has been a sort of understood thing in our families, that we were to be married, and we were looked upon as almost betrothed. Felix has always wished for this union, my mother the same, and I have had nothing against it till I learned to become better acquainted with myself. I now know very well that I never can love Felix properly, because I cannot highly esteem him, as I will and must highly esteem my husband; but——"

"But what, my sweet Selma?"

"If I can make him and others happy, then—neither shall I myself be unhappy. And then—God will give me, perhaps, a child, which I can love, and in which I can have pleasure in the world."

With this Selma wept quite softly, leaning on my shoulder.

I wished to know what Selma had actually promised to young Delphin.

"I have prayed him," replied she, "for one whole year not to speak of his love, but to prove it to me in actions and behaviour. Should I be in this manner convinced that his inclination towards me is actually as great as he says, then I will, when the year of trial is over, consent to be his bride. That I have promised. Felix desires now nothing more; he prayed only for a ring, which he might wear on his hand as a memorial of this hour and of his promise. I gave him the ring with the sapphire. He was so happy,

so glad! Ah, Sophia! I must be happy too, since I have done that which is right, and have perhaps saved a human being."

And again Selma's eyes beamed with pure joy, although through a haze of tears. I rejoiced heartily in her prudence and goodness, but still felt myself quite melancholy on her account.

The 18th.

"Invited out for the whole week!" With these words my stepmother met me this morning, and her countenance shewed an intelligible pleasure through an assumed light veil of well-bred weariness and tedium of the world! I exhibited not the least sorrow, especially as I saw my stepmother and the two young girls taken up in the highest degree with the thoughts and business of the toilet. I feel myself fortunate to escape these molestations, and that I can stay at home. My stepmother persuaded me, indeed, a very little "to go with them." But it is not in right earnest.

The 21st.

Among all these dissipations, which reign in the house; amid all those beautiful toilets and artificial flowers, and all these so-called pleasures, still strange symptoms break forth, which testify of the volcanic soil upon which they dance.

Flora has been for several days as changeable in her temper as in her dress; and it has seemed to me,

as if she by these changes endeavoured merely to fetter Lennartson's attention, or more correctly, to charm him, and his eye follows her too with attention, but rather with the gravity of the observer than with the expression of the enraptured lover. It seems to me sometimes, as if with all these changes of Flora's he asked, 'which is the true?' and so ask I also; because, whilst she evidently endeavours to draw Lennartson to herself, she disdains not several by-conquests, and keeps these up also with her charms and her endeavours. St. Orme plays the while an apparently indifferent part, but is often betrayed by his crafty glance. He watches her secretly.

Among the pictures in the inner ante-room, there is a beautiful portrait of Beatrice Cenci, the unfortunate fratricide. To-day Flora stood before it, and observed it long, sunk in silent thought. I looked at her, for she was beautiful, as she stood there with an Undine-garland of coral and white water-lilies in her brown hair, and in a dress of that chameleon-like changing-coloured material, which in this year is so much the mode. All at once she broke silence, and said—

"Can you tell me, wise Philosophia! why I find pleasure in this picture; in studying this Beatrice Cenci?"

"Probably because she is so touchingly beautiful," said I.

"No! but for this, because she was so firm and determined. Such people refresh the mind—especially, when we are disgusted by the undecided, weak, characterless people, who are now so abundant in the world. What think you of Beatrice?"

"I deplore her from my whole heart. It must be horrible to hate the author of one's own life."

"Yes, indeed, horrible!" interrupted Flora warmly. "Yes, it is horrible to hate one's parents, but horrible also, if one were compelled to despise them."

Flora with this hid her face in her hands. I looked at her with astonishment and sympathy.

"Ah!" continued she with excitement, "let no one say that it is a matter of indifference what song is sung beside a child's cradle; it sounds through his whole life. Lennartson, Selma, why are they so good, so wholly good; and I, why am I so?—And yet,—Sophia! I am no ordinary person!"

I was silent, and Flora continued, while she looked sharply at me,—

"I know that you never can like me, and that you never did me justice, but still you will not say that I am an *ordinary* person."

"Extraordinary and beautifully gifted are you in all things," replied I, "but perhaps you are in reality less extraordinary than you fancy yourself to be. For the rest, dear Flora, I cannot judge you, because I do not yet know you. You are often so unlike yourself—you are, as if you were not one, but two—nay, several persons."

"Nor am I *one* person!" replied Flora; "I have a double being, one good, and one bad, that always casts its spells around me; that is my other I, and follows me like my shadow, and places itself between me and all truth, by day and by night; abroad and at home; when I laugh and when I weep; at the ball and in the church,—yes, even in church it places itself between me and heaven! How is it then possible that I can have peace—that I can be saved? Ah! would that I were a little grey sparrow of the field?"

"And why a sparrow?" asked I.

"Because then nobody would trouble themselves about me, and would know nothing of me——But hush! I feel in me that one of my bad demons is near!"

"Let him obtain no power over you!" prayed I warmly and zealously.

"He has power!" said Flora, with a horrible expression, "and I stand on the brink of an abyss! and soon—soon enough shall I be precipitated down, if not——" she was silent; light footsteps made themselves audible in the outer ante-room, and St. Orme entered. Immediately afterwards came my stepmother and Selma, and all went together to supper at the Silfverlings.

The 23d.

New and distinguishing tokens! My stepmother has her Metternich demeanour, and the telegraph

movements between her and the Chamberlain go on. I suspect strongly a complot against my precious freedom. "Must go cautiously and a little diplomatically to work," I heard my stepmother say, softly, this day to my uncle; "you have not let Sophia suspect anything?"

"No; but I feel my way in a delicate manner; confide yourself to me; I understand the ladies," replied he.

To that end my stepmother plagues me with encomiums on the Chamberlain, and the Chamberlain with questions as to my taste in furniture; for example, with regard to the form of tables and bookcases, and so forth. He wishes, he says, in the furnishing of two new rooms that they should be wholly arranged according to my taste. But what is his furniture to me? If my stepmother sings my uncle's praise, he is no less generous in praise of her."

"She is one of the most superior ladies that I know," said he again to-day, "a tact, a judgment, a discretion! Ah! one can confide every thing to her; and I, for my part, when I will do a little good in secret, I know no one whom I would so willingly, and with the most perfect assurance can, make my confidant."

I began over all this to become impatient.

People talk of the marriage of Brenner with a young, lovely and rich widow. This has a little annoyed me. Brenner's behaviour appears to me strange. Why has

he not spoken to me of this connexion? I am his friend—his sisterly friend. And why? — I cannot endure anything enigmatical in him: but perhaps it is unjust in me so to regard it.

The 24th.

My stepmother and I are on cool terms. Her attempt to impose upon me is repulsed; I am proud, and shew my sense of freedom in a not particularly amiable manner. Dissatisfied looks from Flora; uneasy and beseeching ones from Selma. General discomfort. If this should cease here, then it would be quite pleasant.

Ah! they say that life stands still if no outward circumstances excite and move it. But it is not so. It seems to me that it is in such quiet times that the angels of heaven listen to human life most attentively—for then tremble the strings in its innermost depths—then are its finest nerves developed—then fashions itself, that which increases the power of heaven or of hell.

At the moment in which the butterfly developes its wings it is quite calm in the secure resting-place which it has selected. In the moment of change its life appears altogether to be an inward one. But the beaming butterfly of day and the nocturnal death's-head moth are children of the same quiet summer-hour.

A ramble out. A hateful, disagreeable day; the

people red-blue, heaven leaden-grey; icicles at all the houses; loose, trampled-up snow, half an ell deep in the streets; vexatious thoughts, unpleasing feelings! Yet——'EVEN THIS WILL PASS OVER!' was the proverb which the wise Solomon gave to an Eastern prince, who desired from him such a motto as would make the soul strong in misfortune, and humble in prosperity; and this motto will I make mine.

The 26th.

I went down yesterday to dinner with the virtuous determination of being complying towards my stepmother, and kind towards everybody. But it was the reverse with me; I entered the inner ante-room, and saw my stepmother and the Chamberlain sitting on the sofa, in confidential and whispered discourse, which they suddenly broke off on my approach. My stepmother seemed very good-humoured, and soon came up to me, and said significantly, as she arranged something in my dress; "I must tell you, that we have just had a long conversation about you and sundry of your concerns——um, um, um!"

"On what concerns?" asked I, with a look as if I would not at all understand it.

"O yes, yes; about certain concerns which everywhere have their importance; um—um—um!" said my stepmother, smiling. And then she began a little speech about its being so pleasant to her to see every one about her happy; how all her thoughts and her

endeavours tended to that; how she thought not at all about herself, how she merely lived for others, and so on. I thought on the bitter recollections of my youth, and assumed a north-pole demeanour on the throne-speech of my stepmother.

We went to dinner. The Chamberlain was '*aux petit soins*,' on my account, and divided the best morsels between himself and me, which had no relish for me. To the most polite observations of my stepmother I answered also coldly, and avoided Selma's looks, which seemed to ask, 'What have we done against thee?' At dinner, youth was praised as the golden age; the Chamberlain said that he had in youth 'rightly intoxicated himself from the cup of enjoyment.' I said, that I had my bitterest remembrances precisely out of my youth; remembrances which even to this day operated disturbingly on my temper. I saw, by the uneasy looks of my stepmother, that she felt this as a reproof to herself. But I had the feeling as if a heavy avalanche lay upon my heart.

In the afternoon, as I was making a little collar, I expressed some vexation that I had no blond with which to trim it. My stepmother hastened instantly to her room, and soon returned with a quantity of beautiful blond, which she playfully threw round my neck, as she prayed me to accept it for love; and I felt myself clasped in her arms, felt her soft breath on my cheek, and she whispered to me archly, that

'my passion for emancipation should not prevent her from holding me fast.' In my present Spitzbergen-mood of mind I recognised nothing in this embrace but an attempt to circumscribe my liberty, and therefore I released myself coolly, and even threw away the blond, because 'it did not suit me; I would get for myself what I wanted.'

My stepmother silently went with her disdained gift back to her room; and as Selma a moment afterwards followed her, I could see, through the open door, how she leaned against the window, looked before her still and sorrowfully, and it seemed to me that tears were on her cheeks.

This sight went to my heart; and whilst I secretly reproached myself for my conduct, I went up to my chamber in order here in quietness, to demand a reckoning with myself. 'But I could hardly recognise again my own room; so changed, so beautified was it. For a while I knew not where I was.

Among some handsome new furniture which had been arranged in it, shewed itself an extremely elegant mahogany bookcase, through whose bright glass windows a number of books in ornamental binding smiled upon me; and from the top looked down majestically a beautiful Minerva's head of bronze.

As an exclamation of astonishment escaped from me, I heard behind me a half-snorting, half-chirping sound; and when I turned myself round, I saw my delighted maid come forth from a window corner,

when she could no longer conceal her sympathy with my amazement.

"Her Grace has long thought about this," related she now out of the fulness of her heart; "and the Chamberlain himself has had the bookcase carried up, and then Miss Selma has been here all the morning to arrange the things in order."

A revolution now took place in me. Perhaps I now saw here the aim of every private conversation, of every telegraphic movement, of every secret agreement, which, as I fancied, had been directed against my freedom. And they had reference merely to my well-being and my pleasure! Perhaps it was the thought on this my astonishment, which had made my stepmother to-day in such high spirits. I fancied that I again felt her embrace, her breath upon my cheeks. And I? how had I met her? how had I suspected, mistaken, rejected her, and occasioned her tears!

With the speed of lightning I hastened down to my stepmother, and here——

I have a bias of a dangerous kind. If my feelings have become ice cold, and then are suddenly thawed by a ray of sunlight or dew-drop of life, then am I usually deluged by them as by a spring-flood, and am ready to deluge the whole world with them. Nay, there exists no person whom in such moments I could not press to my heart; and for those who are dear to me I have only one feeling, the feeling of

giving them all that I have, myself into the bargain. Seneca and Cicero, and Schlegel and Hegel, and the doctrines of all the wise men of the world on self-government, and quietness and moderation, are in such moments merely like oil upon a waterfall. Certain experiences have, it is true, brought me somewhat to control this rushing flood; but in certain moments nevertheless they will have their way, and the present moment was one of them. Yes, so deeply affected was I by the goodness of my stepmother, and so full of contrition for my own injustice, that —if she now had required that I should confer my hand on the Chamberlain—I should, I think, have done it.* But, thanks be to my good stars! she thought not of that; and I could undisturbedly enjoy all the amenities of life which blossomed there, where human souls overflowed in intimacy and love towards each other.

I have silently vowed by Minerva's head, never again to torment with unnecessary suspicion my stepmother and myself. I feel, therefore, a ship's load lighter at heart. I hear Selma joyfully sing. God bless the singing bird! Her song always celebrates the sunny hours of home. She resembles in this the singing birds of Sweden, who (Nilson relates in his Fauna) sing the sweetest after soft summer rain.

* It may be customary in Sweden for uncles to marry their nieces—we can only say, however, that it sounds very odd in English.—M. H.

The 28th.

Continued rapture on my part over the bookcase, and so on. Increasing pleasure and increasing contentment on the part of my stepmother. Light on the fate of Europe, through my stepmother and me. Active trade with the Lady Councillors of commerce; one betroths, one marries, one strikes people dead; in one word, one cares for the success of the world. With all this, secret vexation in my soul. I have not seen the Viking for several days. He ought indeed, at least, to come and announce his betrothal to his friend.

The 29th.

To-day a ramble out. I met the Viking, who was angry, and quarreled because we were out exactly then; and that I, if I also had been at home, and alone, received him not. I was rather proud at this assertion, and assumed a rather frosty deportment, on which Brenner left me tolerably short and cold. Now, now,—

I care for nobody, nobody;
And nobody cares for me!

Thank God! thus can I yet sing, and thus will I ever be able to sing.

I will have no vexation, no unnecessary vexation. I have had enough of that in my life, I have had it from feelings all too warm. I will have these no more. And therefore will I remain cold and calm,

as the marble statues which we shall see by wax-light in the sculpture gallery to-night.

Eleven at night.

But when one sees between the cold marble statues and the pale flames of the waxlights a warmly-beaming human eye which rests with gentle sun-strength upon us—who can prevent the heart becoming warm and soft, prevent the gallery itself from being converted into a temple of the sun. Thus happened it to me, as in the Niobe Gallery, between Roman Emperors and Caryatides I discovered—the Viking. As I met his eye I involuntarily extended my hand, and felt at the same moment his warm, true hand-pressure. O we must still always continue friends! Brenner, however, did not join us. He seemed to have undertaken to protect two ladies, one of whom was young and very pretty. "Perhaps she is his bride," thought I. But I gave up this opinion as again and again I saw his eye between the marble statues directed to me with an expression which quietly did my heart good. The meeting of this glance, the sentiment of a deep sympathy with a warm and noble heart, gave to the ramble through this marble-hall on the arm of the Chamberlain an extraordinary charm. I felt my heart beat with a full, although calm life, amid these senseless statues; and the perhaps yet less feeling crowd of people, who in elegant dresses filled the galleries, were occupied

rather as it seemed to me with the lighting-up, with the handsome dresses, with the Queen and her Court, (who also were there), than with the masterpieces of art. But wherefore do I blame that? I myself thought more of the people than of the statues. Lennartson gave his arm to my stepmother, and directed his words and remarks particularly to Selma, who looked lovely, but thoughtful; whilst Flora, on her brother's arm, in a kind of feverish endeavour seemed to wish by her person and her sallies to occupy all those around her. St. Orme, Baron Alexander, and a couple of other gentlemen followed her amid applause and admiration. She was very well dressed and exceedingly lovely.

In the so-called Sergel's room my attention was drawn to three different models for the artist's group of Cupid and Psyche, because we saw so plainly in it the works of a mind which clearly understood itself and possessed itself of the life which he would express. In the first model the statues are ill-shaped, coarse, unpliant, soul-less, Egyptian-mummy-like; they lock themselves together in a block-like oneness. In the next they have already life and motion; but are yet without harmony, without beauty and higher unity. These they obtain first in their third formation, when the artist has won the victory, and the splendid figures express the combat of human passions, softened by divine grandeur and beauty. Methought I saw in these forms the whole development,

as in humanity so in man, and glad in these thoughts I turned myself round with the necessity of communicating them to some one, who could or would understand me. I saw now in my neighbourhood only Flora, who with an expression of impatience and also of bitterness listened to St. Orme, who spoke to her in a low voice. As my eye met that of Flora, she said, suddenly breaking off, and in a joking tone, "What revelation has Sophia had now? Her eye glows as if she had discovered a new world."

"Merely a thought," replied I, "is become clear to me here." And, carried away by my feelings, I shewed to her the three model-groups, told her what they had led me to think upon the development and perfecting of life, on the patience and strength of the true artist, which never rests till it has approached its goal, nor till it sees that its work is good.

St. Orme smiled sarcastically at my enthusiasm, but Flora listened to me attentively. Afterwards she said, "Sergel was fortunate; he was not hindered like many others in his development, was not hindered in working out his own perfection by"—she checked herself, and I continued inquiringly "by?"

"By the want of a great object," continued Flora, with a strong emphasis and with a bitter expression of countenance.

But, nevertheless, I saw this with joy, for I recognised the thoughts and the expression which at times

flashed forth in Flora, and made me conscious of the existence of a higher spirit in her enigmatical being.

St. Orme yawned aloud, and began a depreciating criticism of the last group, which was meant to shew the folly of my admiration, the imperfection of the artist, and the superiority of his own acuteness.

To me this criticism betrayed merely St. Orme's want of a noble mind. I felt myself also wounded by his scarcely courteous manner towards me; but I am so afraid in such cases of letting myself down by repayment in like coin, or in permitting myself to be mastered by a little desire of revenge, that I listened to St. Orme in silence, without giving any sign of the displeasure which I felt. Yet I was glad to be liberated from it by the Viking, who having disposed of his ladies (God knows how), now came hastily to me in order to call my attention to the group of Oxenstjerna and History, and also to the remarkably noble and powerful countenance of the great statesman. In the joyous frank expression of Brenner, I perceived a feeling of fresh sea-air which often comes over me from this spirit. For the rest, he complained that he was wearied, that he had no taste for cold, lifeless figures.

It was nevertheless determined, that this evening the lifeless figures should reveal to me many depths of the living ones.

We were advancing to the marble gallery of Logård where Odin stands so commandingly, Endy-

mion slumbers so sweetly, Venus jests with Love, Apollo plays upon the lyre, and all the Muses stand around him.

There the royal secretary, von Krusenberg, joined us, who bowing ceremoniously before gods and men, thus made himself perceived by us,—

"It is certain that here one can say that one is in good company. One feels oneself really exalted by it."

"Yes," interposed Baron Alexander, "here one escapes at least the elbow-thrusts of the people; of the common herd which fills the streets and alleys."

Such expressions I cannot bear, and cannot hear them in silence. I replied therefore not quite courteously,—

"I believe certainly, that among the so-called 'people,' one meets with honester and better individuals than among the heathen divinities. There is a deal of the 'herd' upon high Olympus."

As a church-weathercock might look down upon the paving-stones, so looked down the great Alexander on me, and St. Orme said sarcastically,—

"Thus it may appear to those who do not enter into the spirit of antiquity, and do not understand how to grasp its works with an enlightened and unprejudiced eye. The Catechism is of no use here as a scale of judgment. The beautiful and the sublime must be measured by another standard."

"I think so too," said Flora. "The Grecian ideal

ought not to be dragged down to the circle of our every-day virtues."

I felt that I crimsoned, for I found that I did not stand upon quite good ground against my adversary. I looked at Selma and she looked at Lennartson, and his calm glance rested upon me with an expression which animated and strengthened me. And I was intending to reply in order to make my meaning more clear, when St. Orme continued,—

"I, for my part, know not what more deserves our homage than the divine gifts of BEAUTY, GENIUS, STRENGTH! I know really nothing which can make themselves of value near them. The small, nameless, modest beings that swarm on the earth cannot do it. No! therefore I beg to hold with the gods, or more particularly with the goddesses. With them one is always at home in a temple of beauty."

"Cultivation of genius!" said Lennartson, smiling, "and many think that this is very sublime and genteel. But more sublime and more genteel is the cultivation which looks indifferently away from accidental, showy gifts, and inquires after merely the essential in man, the goodness and the earnestness of the will; which beholds in each man an elect genius, an heir of another divine home, a living thought of God, which ennobles him for the citizenship of an eternal kingdom, and conducts him there. One may do justice to the heathen point of view, yet with all propriety find its inferiority to the very highest, that is, to *Christianity*."

This was evidently said to extricate me out of my dilemma, and it seemed to me as if the heathen divinities suddenly grew pale, or evaporated into ghost-like figures, and the great Alexander shrivelled up into a dwarf; von Krusenberg crept behind Odin, whilst Selma and I looked up with delight to Lennartson. St. Orme and Baron Alexander consoled themselves by communicating to each other their paltry thoughts on people who could make so much ado about an insignificant occurrence among insignificant beings, and would ascribe a world-historical signification to an event which had happened here two thousand years ago. 'How foolish!'

I listened to the two gentlemen, and wondered that *great learning* could be so completely united to great *poverty of mind.*

The truth is, that I have found among simple youths and maidens, more *deep feeling* for the deep in life, than among a certain kind of the learned.

Some time after this, we stood in the middle of the gallery, before a marble group, Cupid and Psyche. One sees Cupid about to leave Psyche in anger, who kneels and prays for forgiveness.

"How could one, like Cupid here, be so immoveable to a beautiful supplicator like Psyche?" we heard von Krusenberg say.

"Yes," said Flora, whilst her eye sought that of Lennartson, "is it possible to repulse her, who loves so, and prays so, even if—if—she be culpable?"

"He must be a downright barbarian!" exclaimed von Krusenberg.

"I think," said Lennartson rather coldly, "that there are actions, which one cannot, and ought not forgive."

"Not even to a beloved one," whispered Flora, with a voice almost imperceptibly tremulous, "not even a bride—a wife?"

"Least of all her," said Lennartson mildly, but with emphasis; and with a serious, penetrating look on Flora.

Shortly afterwards some one seized my arm hastily and whispered, "Come with me! I am ill!"

It was Flora; she was pale as death. But the very moment when I was about to go with her (Felix was with Selma, and did not see us), in the same moment Lennartson stood by her side, and led her out of the crowd.

"A little fresh air! I faint!" stammered Flora. Lennartson opened the doors towards the Logårds terrace, and we soon saw the starry heavens above our heads, and the wind of the winter-night blew cold on our cheeks.

Lennartson ordered one of the velvet-covered benches to be brought out for Flora, gave her a glass of water to drink, and shewed her the tenderest care. I removed a few steps. The scene and the time were solemn. We stood, as it were in the heart of the castle, whose high and gloomy walls surrounded us

on three sides; the fourth opened to us the beautiful prospect over the harbour, with its wreath of mountains and inhabited islands, wholly concealed in the nocturnal twilight, lit only by the stars of heaven and the flickering lights of earth. The lights of the gallery threw broad stripes of light between the clipped trees upon the high terrace where we stood, and which were broken by the shadows of the tree-stems. I saw all this, whilst my ear involuntarily caught the words which were exchanged between two human beings, who seemed in this moment to approach the crisis of their strange connexion, the separating point in their lives.

I heard Lennartson ask something with a soft, almost loving voice, and Flora replied,—

"Better—better *now!* O Lennartson, because thou now lookest bright and gentle, like the heavens above us, and not like the cold marble images within."

Lennartson was silent. Flora continued, with greater emotion, "Lennartson thou art really as stern, as severe as he, as immovable as thy words sound now. Ah, my God! tell me, how am I to understand thee?"

"Flora," said Lennartson, also deeply affected, "I it is who might have asked thee this question for some time; I it is who wish to understand thee. If thou lovest me—"

"More than every thing—more than my life," interrupted Flora vehemently.

"Good then!" continued Lennartson, taking both

her hands into his, and bending himself over them, "if it be so, then—be open, be candid towards me. Explain to me—"

"Ah! all, all, whatever thou wilt, Lennartson. But at a more suitable time. Here it is—so cold."

"Cold!" exclaimed Lennartson, "that is only an excuse. Be at least, for this once, candid, Flora. Thy hands burn. Thou feelest now no cold."

"No! my heart is warm, warm for thee, Thorsten. And therefore have patience with me. I love thee so strongly, so childishly;—yes, I am therefore afraid of thee, Lennartson; afraid of seeing thee grave and stern. Oh, if I only knew that thou rightly lovedest me, then I should not long be incomprehensible to thee! Oh say, canst thou not love me so, at least, not for my love's sake?"

Methought that loving tone of Flora's was answered. I saw Lennartson bend himself lower before her, heard—the doors of the gallery again open, and saw my stepmother, together with her party, come out, seeking uneasily for us.

On the arm of Lennartson, Flora again entered the illuminated gallery.

Had Flora now obtained a certainty from the heart of Lennartson, which she had not before; had words been spoken which my ear had not perceived, but which had loosened the horrible bond by which Flora had been held captive? This is certain, that a bright joy seemed to have elevated her whole being. Never

was she more captivating, nor had Lennartson been more captivated by her charms. Selma looked gently but pale on them both, whilst St. Orme regarded either with a subtly-searching glance. This glance made me suspect that Flora's romance is still yet far from its termination, and that a new revolution may soon take place.

The 1st of February.

The revolution in Flora has taken place, and all is as dark as ever.

This forenoon I heard outside before my chamber various strange sounds, as of persons violently quarreling. I went out to see what it might be; the little passage between Flora's room and mine was empty, but the door of Flora's outer room was half open, and through this I saw, to my astonishment, Flora endeavouring to release her hands from St. Orme, who held them forcibly. Both looked up to the window by which they stood.

"Ah! let me go!" besought Flora, warmly. "Let me liberate it! It will be soon too late! See, the ugly spider has caught it already!"

"Why must it fly into the web?" said St. Orme, with his cold scorn. "Let it be. It will be interesting to see if it can liberate itself, whether it can escape. If not, then,—*laissez faire la fatalité.*"

"Ah! it is already his prey! The poor wretch! Adrian, let me go!" (She stamped with her foot). "You are a cruel, horrible man!"

"Because I will not mourn about a fly? The little fool, she has created her fate herself, and who knows whether after all she is so very unfortunate? And the spider! Who knows whether he be so cruel? He merely embraces the little fly."

At this moment a pair of fire-tongs was suddenly raised, which tore the spider's web, and separated the spider and the fly. This catastrophe was occasioned by me; I had, armed with the first best weapon which chance offered me, approached the combatants. At sight of me St. Orme released Flora and exclaimed,—

"See, there comes truly, as if from heaven, a saving angel! Pity is it only, that the noble deed comes too late."

And it was too late. The fly fell dead upon the window frame.

"But," continued St. Orme, "Sophia can very well write an elegy or moral observations, and thus it may be always a means of edification, and——"

Flora sprang with her hands before her face suddenly into the inner room. I followed her, and St. Orme went away, whistling an opera air upon the steps.

Flora gave herself up to such an outbreak of violence as I had never seen before. She tore her hair, cried, and threw herself with convulsive sighs and tears on the floor. I stood amazed and silent, and looked at her. Where now was the beautiful

Flora? It was a fury that I saw before me. I offered her a glass of water; she emptied it hastily, and then became by degrees somewhat calmer.

"Dearest Flora," said I at length, "why this? How can the fate of a fly thus——"

"Fly?" exclaimed Flora; "do you think that I trouble myself about this? No, I mourn over myself. I, Sophia, I am this unfortunate fly. I shall be a prey of this——and he knows it, the horrible wretch, he enjoys it; he amuses himself in seeing this image of my fate, of my anguish—the cruel one, the detestible one, who——"

"But how? but why?" asked I, interrupting the tempest of names which Flora gave to St. Orme.

"Inquire not!" replied she impatiently. "I cannot say, and it would serve to no purpose. Ah! why are there not in our country those protecting institutions which Catholic countries are possessed of, where a person can escape from the world, from himself, and from others; nay, can be saved even from humiliation,—where even the fallen woman, sustained by the Cross, can erect herself, and under the protection of heaven, can stand there purified and ennobled before the eyes of the world!"

And Flora was again beautiful, as she raised herself up and turned her glistening tearful eyes towards heaven. But this exaltation lasted but for a moment. Then continued she with renewed bitterness,—

"And if he pursue me I will become Catholic;

nay, I will become a Turk or a Fantee woman. I would adore the Virgin Mary, or Mahomet, or the Great Mogul, or the devil himself, or whatever it might be, if it would only free me from this man."

"Your call for a convent-life," said I smiling, "does not appear to me to be of the right kind. But Flora, I imagined that you had given yourself up to a good and strong spirit, that you belonged to Thorsten Lennartson."

"Belonged? yes, with my whole soul, with my whole heart, but——"

"Why do you not turn yourself to him with open heart, with full confession? He would free you."

"So you talk! Ah, you know not——Yes, if he loved me as I love him! But,—ah, if I knew, if I rightly knew! Why are there no longer oracles, no sibyls, no witches or prophetesses, in the world, to whom one might go in one's need, and from whom one could demand counsel, a hint, a glance into the future? But all that which is pleasant is dead now. How unbearable and flat and insipid is the world now, with its regularity, with its rationality. It disgusts me. I am disgusted with myself. Every thing is nauseous and unbearable to me. Do not stand and look at me Sophia! Leave me! I will not be a spectacle for you. I know that you hate me, but now I am indeed unfortunate enough. Let me, at least, be alone!"

"No! not now. Let me rule over you a little

while, Flora! You will then better understand my hatred. I am just going out. Attend me, and let me conduct you. The snow without will fall coolingly upon your hot brow."

I approached her, and began to arrange her hair.

"Do with me what you will!" said she, and remained passive. I helped her to put on her winter dress, and silently we went together out into the free air.

It snowed and blew. We went towards the lowest quay down to the river, on the way to the North Bridge. Flora looked at the foaming waves.

"How it foams! how it struggles!" said she, "see, see how the sea-waves now endeavour to heave themselves, and now are subjected from the other side, and are obliged to sink in their exasperation, because the Mälar-stream proudly rushes over them. The poor waves! I should like to know whether they feel what it is so exactly to sink beneath oneself, to wrestle and to struggle, without hope of ever conquering."

"In a few days" said I, "the Mälar water will perhaps have lost its power, and the combating streams will have come into equipoise."

"Sometimes," said Flora, "it also happens that the angry waves obtain the upper hand, and rush over the others, and exasperate them. There is a retaliation."

We were again silent. I led Flora over the

bridge and through the streets into the city. There are the oldest memories of Stockholm; here is the heart of the Stockholm city, which also has the form of a heart; here flowed the blood of the nobles of Sweden in streams from the hand of Christiern; here the streets are narrow, the lanes dark; but here also is the Castle of Stockholm; and here lift themselves even now, a mass of houses, which shew by their inscriptions cut in stone, the strong fear of God which built up in ancient times the realm of Sweden.

We went into a dark doorway, ornamented with statuary work, of one of their houses, which had stood for centuries, and over the doorway of which was inscribed a verse from the Psalms of David in old Swedish.

Flora was undecided: "Whither do you conduct me?" asked she hesitating.

"To a witch," replied I.

"Are there yet witches in Sweden?" said Flora, following me. "But," continued she somewhat disparagingly, "I have no confidence in the witches of our day, with their card and coffee-cup wisdom."

After we had mounted several steps, I opened a door, and we entered a room where a young girl sate and sewed. I prayed Flora to wait for me here, and went into another chamber, the door of which was shut.

After some time I returned to Flora, and led her in with me.

I saw an expression of astonishment and curiosity depict itself in her countenance, as her eyes riveted themselves upon the figure which, clad in a flowing black silk robe, sate in a large chair by the only window of the room, the lower part of which was shaded by a green curtain. The daylight streamed from the upper half of the window brightly down upon a countenance which was less consumed by age than by suffering, and whose strong and not handsome features stifled the idea that it had ever possessed charms, or that looks of love could ever have rested upon it. Yet this countenance was not without sun. It had a pair of eyes whose glance was not common. It was restless, and as it were vacillating towards indifferent things and objects. But if it were animated by a feeling or by a thought —and that often was the case—then it had beams that could warm, strength which could penetrate; for there lay in it great and deep earnestness. The hair, still beautiful, and of a dark brown, was drawn off the large brow. A plain snow-white lace-cap surrounded the pale, grave countenance. The unknown held the left hand of an almost transparent delicacy, against her breast, in the other she had a pencil, with which she appeared to have been making observations in the margin of a large Bible.

The furniture of the room was so simple that it

might have belonged to poverty, but all bore the stamp of neatness and comfort, which does not unite itself with poverty. A vase of fresh flowers stood upon the table, upon which lay books and manuscripts. Every thing in the room was simple and ordinary; the large wonderful eyes alone which beamed there, awoke a feeling that this was the dwelling of a powerful life.

Flora seemed to receive an impression of this, as we neared the unknown, who greeted us with great friendliness, as she said, excusing herself, "permit me that I remain seated!"

She invited us with the hand to seat ourselves upon the two cane chairs which stood near the table, and gave to us smiling a sprig of geranium from the flower-vase on the table.

Her earnest eyes riveted themselves upon Flora, who cast down hers, and appeared to struggle for the power to raise them again. I withdrew presently from that part of the room, and left the two together.

I heard the unknown say with a gentle, grave voice; "So young, so beautiful, and yet — not happy!"

Flora was silent a moment, and seemed to struggle with herself. At length she said:

"No! not happy, but—who can tell me how I may become so? Knew I any one who could tell me that, I would go to him through deserts and midnight; but oracles have vanished from the world."

"Not vanished, but only changed their abode," said the unknown, calmly.

"Changed their abode? To where?"

"From the ancient temples, from the deserts, have they removed into the most holy sanctuary of life, into the human soul."

"And thither," continued Flora, sarcastically, "it is indeed more difficult to come than to Delphi and Dodona. And what would now this new-fashioned oracle reply to my question? How shall I become happy?"

"Follow the inward voice!"

"A true oracular answer, that is to say, an answer that says nothing at all. I at least know nothing of *one* inward voice, but of ten, at least, which one after the other speak in me."

"One must not believe all voices, one must question and deeply listen till one hears the right voice."

"There are in the soul," said the unknown, in a friendly, smiling, insinuating manner, "quiet groves, silent grottoes, and temples — thither must we go. There speaks our genius." The unknown seemed to enjoy the pictures which she called forth.

It seemed to me, as if a certain coolness had overflowed Flora's passionate soul at these words. With a sigh and a tearful eye she said,—

"Oh! he who flees to this still region and there finds rest, must yet flee from the world and from himself!"

"He should not flee, he should only collect himself, collect himself in stillness, but for a great object in life."

Flora's thoughts before the sculpture of Sergel seemed to return to her; her look was animated.

"Ah!" said she, "I have sometimes imagined and thought, but — it is now too late. The unrooted flower can no longer keep itself firm, it must be driven by wave and wind."

"It is never too late," said the unknown, emphatically. "But it may often be difficult enough. Ah! I know it well, this flower without a root, this want of foundation and soil, which is commonly the fruit of a false education. No way is more difficult than the way to collect oneself out of dissipation and to become oneself, but still it may be found, and we may walk in it."

At this moment a sunbeam broke through the window, and streamed softly trembling through the flowers of the vase upon the pages of the holy book. The eye of the unknown followed the path of light and shone with great delight as she spoke in broken sentences—

"No! it is never too late to tread the bright paths which unite heaven and the earth and mankind to each other in noble endeavours. They open themselves in our days richer than ever, and in all directions—in all spheres of life—and the eyes of men become more and more opened, and love refuses not

his guiding hand! Courage only and a resolute will, and the apparently unrooted plant will take root firmly, and will bloom forth beautifully in the light of the Eternal!"

Flora followed not. As the spirit of the unknown thus raised itself towards the light, Flora's spirit seemed to sink and to look down into the darker depth.

"And after all," said she, gloomily, "everything is yet vanity. Every human life has its snake, against which no power can combat. Sooner or later a time comes to every one in which all pleasure is at an end, in which one is subjected to pain, to old age, to death! Is there no power, no bliss, which this can withstand?"

"Yes! let a dying one assure you of this. See you! I go now with rapid speed towards my change, and great are my sufferings; yet I am so happy that day and night I must sing praises. Many a charming draught has life extended to me; much that was bitter has been changed into sweet, but yet *the best* wine has been preserved for me till the last."

"The lots here in the world are thrown differently for mankind," said Flora, not without bitterness; "some seem made for misfortune, others again have, like you, sunshine from the cradle to the grave. And for these it must be easy to be good."

"You would perhaps think differently, if you knew me rightly," said the unknown softly; "and a glance

into my breast would allow you to judge whether I have always had a sun-brightened life, as you imagine —and yet you would only see an image of affliction which no human eye has seen, and which I, myself, have almost forgotten. The bitter waves have long ceased to roar, but they have left traces behind them." She opened the black dress, removed a white cloth, and shewed us——a horrible sight! The bloody picture was soon concealed again.

"Pardon me!" said the unknown to Flora, who with a cry of horror had covered her eyes, "and now fear not! I feel that suffering comes. I shall not be able to keep back all complaint. But be not terrified, it will soon be over."

At that moment she seized convulsively a roll of papers, the whole body trembled, and the hue of death overspread her face, which with a dull cry of pain sunk upon her breast. This continued probably for ten minutes, then the hyæna of pain seemed to release the sufferer from his claws, but she evidently had not fully recovered her mind, and her soul seemed to wander in far regions, whilst her lips spoke broken words, like to those which Asaria sung in the fiery furnace.

By degrees the exalted expression passed from her countenance. A slumber, as it were, came over it. Then the unknown opened her eyes; they were clear and full of consciousness. She took up a little mirror which lay on the table and contemplated herself in it.

"It is over!" said she, as if to herself, and smiled with a thankful look towards heaven. Now for the first time she seemed to remember that she was not alone.

"It is now over," as she turned her again-enfeebled glance to Flora and me, "forgive me! Yet I know certainly that you do so. Compassionate me not! I am happy, unspeakably happy!"

I arose in order to end our visit.

"Permit me to come again," prayed Flora with tearful eyes, as she took her leave.

"Willingly," replied the unknown, directed to us a dimmed but friendly look, and extended to us her hand affectionately.

We went.

"Who is she?" asked Flora on the steps.

"She will be unknown," replied I, and we were both silent till we reached home.

As I went down to dinner I heard my young sister (who knew nothing of the forenoon's revolution in Flora) thus giving orders in the drawing-room:

"Trala, la, la! Jacob, do not forget, immediately after dinner, to go to the old coachman with this cake and bottle of wine. And in coming back do not forget to bring the rennets with you, of which my mother is so fond. And you, Ulla, remember at last that you have Miss Flora's dress ready this evening. You must be prodigiously industrious. La, lalali, la, la, la! And to-morrow you shall make yourselves

merry. Then I shall let you go to the opera to see the 'May-day.' There you shall be merry to some purpose. Jacob shall be Ulla's and Karin's protector. Tralalili, lalali, la, la, la.

Thus went on for a while the harmonious commands, and gave me again a little proof that it is the endeavour of my Selma in the world to make every one around her happy. But *endeavour* is not the right word. When goodness approaches its consummation it has an inward harmony, an ennobled nature, whose movements are as involuntarily beautiful as the movements of Taglioni in the Sylphide. She makes the most difficult thing easy, and gives a charm to the meanest exterior of life.

Flora, during dinner, was thoughtful and gloomy. In the afternoon Lennartson came, and had a long conversation with her. He seemed earnestly and fervently to beseech something from her. She wept. At length I heard her say with vehemence,—

"Not now, not now, Lennartson. Have patience with me still, for a little time, and I will tell you all; and then you will see that you are the only one in the world whom I love."

Lennartson now arose with a strong expression of discontent. He appeared impatient, and came into the other ante-room, in which Selma and I sate. The sun shone through the crystal of the chandelier, and hundreds of little prismatic flames trembled on the walls, and on the pictures with which these were

covered. Selma remarked the beauty of the colours, and the impression which their beauty made upon the mind.

"Yes!" said Lennartson aloud, as he fixed his eyes upon her, "light, purity is beautiful, as in colour so also in the human mind. I cannot comprehend how people love darkness, how people can be willing to linger in it; they must, in that case, have something to conceal, or——suspiciously dread the light."

Flora had approached, but remained standing at the door, on whose frame she leaned, whilst she held her hand pressed upon her breast, and riveted a glance of bitter pain on the speaker.

Selma saw this, and tears came into her lovely eyes. She said to Lennartson with animation and almost reproach—

"Clouds often conceal the sun from us, and yet it is still bright. If we could only raise ourselves above the clouds we should see it."

Lennartson looked at Selma with an inquiring glance, which by degrees melted away in mildness.

"Yes, you are right," said he slowly; "there may be faults in those who complain."

He went again to Flora, siezed her hand, bowed himself over it, and said some words to her which I did not hear, but whose effect I remarked in Flora's grateful look. Lennartson soon after this left us.

The 2d of February.

Flora is calmer, and all quiet in the house. I begin to be satisfied with the polemical connexion between me and my stepmother. But shall we ever attain to the ideal of a noble contention, which the German professors, Feuerbach and Grollmann, have shewed to the world? These two remarkable men were the warmest friends, and, in the early part of their lives, were of the same way of thinking. Afterwards they separated in their scientific views, but without thereby allowing their personal esteem and friendship to be disturbed. They invariably dedicated to each other their works, in which they invariably sought the one to convert the other. Thus they argued in love, and by the production of excellent works, to the end of their lives. Over such contentions must angels indeed rejoice.

5th February.

My acquaintance with the Viking begins to be somewhat stormy. But I console myself with the thought that 'the storm belongs to God's weather,'* and may be governed by His spirit.

We were invited yesterday to a breakfast at the Chamberlain's. Without flattering myself, and without great self-love, I could very well understand the correctness of my stepmother's diplomatic hint, namely, that the breakfast was given on my account.

* Geijer.

The host did me *les honneurs* of his handsome house; his splendid furniture, his Athenienne, with a thousand little sumptuousnesses; his many arrangements, for convenience, and for the pleasant enjoyment of life; nay, I must even see his own expensive toilet. Whilst I thus wandered with him through his rooms, I in vain sought for a picture of actual value, or an object of higher interest; I found nothing of the kind, and I could not say much about the rest of the ornaments.

Wilhelm Brenner's eye was often watchfully directed upon me, whilst I was receiving so much of the host's attention. He on the contrary was taken up with a very pretty Mrs. Z. — the same with whom I had seen him at the gallery—a widow, and rich. 'Z.,' says a writing copy, 'is in the Swedish language a superfluous letter;' and so methought was Mrs. Z. at this breakfast. By the abstracted looks of the Viking, I might have presumed that he thought so too; but for all that he remained near her, and amused himself by observing me from a distance. This rather vexed me; and thus for that reason I entertained myself more than common with the wit of my courteous uncle, said merry things myself, and contributed in my own way to entertain the company, for which I received much applause, especially from my stepmother. Towards two o'clock people separated, and went home. As the weather was fine we walked. I saw Mrs. Z. go away on the arm of the Viking. The Chamberlain accompanied us, together with other gentlemen.

Scarcely were we come to the Castle Hill, when the Viking, under full sails from the side of the Bridge of Boats, joined himself to us. He was quite warm, and wiped his forehead. I had the Chamberlain on my left; Brenner took the right, and heard how I was making love—ridiculous! But what he had not heard was the occasion for my satirical sally, namely, the sighs and the little song of my uncle's love and the warmth of his heart! all which cooled me indescribably, because I knew the ground and the intention of it.

"I think," said I, "that never was so much said about love, and so little known about it as in our days. Those who talk publicly the loudest about Christian love, rend one another most bitterly; and as concerns the love which men vow to women, these are only springs of a very doubtful value. How many tender flames—those which are more smoke than flame—burst forth because one has ennui, because one wants to amuse oneself in some way? Is it not thus in glowing Italy; as you yourself have told me? Do not people form connexions there on purpose to drive away time? and merely continue them, because one has no spirit to undertake something else? and so one drags lamentably through life with sighs and lemonade. Here, in our North, we seek really a little more substantial nourishment for love, seek the good things which open a prospect to comfortable life, dinners and good suppers, and so on.

Yet the foundation is still no better, and love is even as—needy."

"Have you then never met with, or seen 'REAL LOVE' in the world?" asked the Viking, with a tone of displeasure, and as it were of compassion for me.

"To be sure," continued I, in the same tone, "to be sure I have seen men feel actual love, nay, actually also become quite thin from it. I have heard them declare, when they met with hard hearts, that their life was gnawed by worms, and that people would soon have to weep over their death. Yes, I believe too, that this at one time they themselves also believed; but this is certain, nevertheless, that in one or two years afterwards I have seen these men marry others than those for whose sake they would die, and that too, stout of body and full of joy. In one word, I have seen enough of life and of the world, to have but little confidence in this so much spoken of, and in romances so much bepraised love, and to wish to have as little as possible to do with it. It is not worth one of the sighs which it costs."

"*Femme philosophe!*" exclaimed the Chamberlain. "You reason perfectly justly as regards this passion. I value the passions very little. Esteem, delicacy, mutual condescension, lay as good a foundation for a much more enduring happiness than——"

We were at this moment just about to cross the North Bridge. Flora just then remembered that she wanted to buy something at Medberg's, my step-

mother and Selma had the same thoughts; but I, who had no such views, and wished to get home, said that I would continue my way alone, and wait for the party at home. I earnestly declined the offers of my uncle to accompany me, and as the rest of the party took their way towards the Mynt-market, I pursued my way over the bridge.

But scarcely had I gone twenty paces when I saw the Viking at my side, and discovered, I know not how, that my arm rested in his. He hasted onwards with such prodigious strides, that I had trouble to keep up with him.

He turned round at a right angle, just where the bridge extends itself to the right, and remained standing in that corner where the river rages below, and the poplars of the river-parterre ascend upwards to the granite balustrades of the bridge. Then he dropped my arm, and turning towards me with a confidential air, said with a warm but suppressed voice,—

"Tell me! Is all that which you have just now said, this cursed gallemathias of love, your really earnest thought?"

"My really earnest thought," repeated I.

"That I will not believe," continued he warmly, "or I pity you from my whole heart! Good heavens! how can you thus despise the highest and holiest in life! When I hear such talk it makes me abusive. How can people be so contracted, nay I must say,

so stupid; and see things in such an oblique, such a false, such a fundamentally false light! I can become angry when I hear how a woman, created to love and to be loved, so mistakes herself, and lets herself be so bewildered by the little poverties of life, that she can exchange them for that of which thought has no idea, and the tongue no word, and which exists as certainly upon the earth as it exists in heaven, and which is the only feeling by which we can comprehend the life of heaven; the only feeling which gives value to life. People talk about science and philosophy as instructors of the heart and of life! That is altogether nonsense say I, compared with the ennobling of a noble love!"

"This is an especially well-chosen place for a *tête-à-tête*, and to preach a sermon on love!" thought I, smiling in my own mind, as I observed the vehement mien of the Viking, and the mass of walking and driving people who were in motion around us, and of whom the Viking, in his angry mood, seemed to take no notice. I was also somewhat confounded by his behaviour towards me, but I looked at the raging waters below me, and at the raging spirit before me, and I know not what fresh breath of air passed over my soul. I was yet silent, when Brenner continued as before—

"And this miserable glass-cupboard reason! It makes people from fear of life, shut themselves in a birdcage; from fear of fresh air, steam themselves to

death in the warmth of the stove; and from fear of strong feelings and great sufferings, waste their souls and their time in mere trifles. Tell me, how can you endure such reason? It is just as false as it is miserable. It is good for nothing, say I!" And the Viking struck with his clenched fist so violently upon the balustrade, that it would have trembled if it had not been of stone.

As I still stood there, like Lot's wife, changed by a shower of fire into a pillar of salt, and was seized upon by a strange feeling, he continued with increasing violence, "Tell me!—I will know, what, or who is it that has let you get hold of such a mistrusting of life, of mankind; nay, even of our Lord himself. If it be your blessed philosophy, then—throw it into the river!"

Brenner, by the violent action which he was here making with his arms, struck my reticule, which rested on the balustrade; it fell into the river, and was borne by its waves rapidly forward into the sea.

This catastrophe, and the sight of the Viking's astonishment, dissolved at once my immoveable state into a hearty laugh, and as Brenner seemed ready to take the speediest measures for saving the reticule, I held him back, and said—

"Trouble not yourself about it. There are only a few rennets that suffer shipwreck in it. I care nothing about it. Only let your angry temper go with it to the sea, for in truth you do me injustice."

"Do I do you an injustice—thank God for it!" said Brenner, with a look which deeply affected me, and I continued—

"Yes, because, although that which I said just now, and which has made you so angry, is actually my serious opinion, yet I have my reservation as to my object. I distinguish between Amor and Eros, but I have seen more of the first than of the last in life, and I spoke properly of that."

"But you believe in the other?"

"That I do. That I will say; I believe in general in the truth and depth of the feelings of which you speak; but in individual cases I am, in consequence of certain experience, always mistrustful. In the mean time, I thank you right openly for the proof of friendship which you have given to me. Ah! let me think about love as I will; I believe in friendship, and I feel that we are friends."

And herewith I took his arm, and began to proceed homewards. The Viking said—

"Love, friendship! should these be thus separated? And how can anybody doubt the one who believes in the other?"

It did not please me to answer this question, and our conversation was here interrupted by our being overtaken by our party who had been left behind. They looked somewhat amazed, and said various things of our 'speedy return home.' The Viking declared—

"Miss Sophia lost her bag or reticule in the river."

But how it was lost, he said not; and they began to propose means for recovering it, and the Viking, again in cheerful humour, made various break-neck and impossible proposals.

The 3d.

A far handsomer reticule, encircled with a bouquet of roses and myrtle, was sent to me from him in the name of the lost one, which, as he said, had been fished out of the river in this form. The 'river spirit' wished in these flowers to speak to you of his love, said the Viking, and he wondered what kind of an answer he would receive.

I said, "Merely great thanks!"

"And if he be not satisfied with that?" asked Brenner.

"Then, his flowers should be—sent back to him," said I, half jesting and half seriously.

"You would not throw them in the river?" said the Viking, quite gravely,—"you are then not afraid of wounding, of doing wrong? You can be stern, *unsparing*."

"You forget," said I, interrupting him, "that the 'river spirit' and his feelings are fictions, and I am no longer of the age in which one believes in such things; neither can I see, dearest Brenner, why a pretty little joke should be taken so seriously, which in itself is very polite, and for which I thank you sincerely."

The Viking was silent, but looked dissatisfied; I begin to fear that the man has a very bad temper.

The 7th.

And a great many faults has he found in me to-day; he has reproached me for my self-will, or, as he called it, my 'Finnish-temper.' I told him that this was precisely my best quality, and as he shook his head, I related to him that I was descended from a race of the Wasastjernar, who had given to the world the most beautiful example of the Finnish national temper. Thus, namely, when the Russians in the year 1809, conquered Finnland, there lived in the city of Wasa, two brothers, one the judge of the court of justice, the other a merchant, who, when the residents of the city were compelled to swear an oath of fidelity to the Emperor of the Russias, alone and stedfastly refused it.

"'We have sworn an oath of fidelity to the King of Sweden, and unless he himself released us from it, we cannot swear obedience to another ruler,' remained their constant answer to all persuasions, as well friendly as threatening. Provoked by this obstinacy, and fearing the example which would be given by it, the Russians threw the stiff-necked brothers into prison and threatened them with death. Their answer remained always the same, to the increasing severity and multiplied threats of the Russians. At length the sentence of death was announced to them, as well as that, on a fixed day, they

were to be conducted out to the Gallows-hill, and there be executed, as criminals, in case their obstinacy did not give way and they took the required oath. The brothers were immoveable. 'Rather,' replied the judge, in the name of both, 'will we die, than become perjured.'

"At this answer, a powerful hand struck the speaker on the shoulder. It was the Cossack who kept watch over the brothers, and now exclaimed with a kindling glance, 'Dobra kamerad' ('bravo comrade!')

"The Russian authorities spoke otherwise, and on the appointed day permitted the brothers to be carried out to the place of execution. They were sentenced to be hanged; but yet once more at this last hour, and for the last time, pardon was offered them if they would but consent to that which was required from them.

"'No!' replied they, 'hang, hang! We are brought hither not for speech-making, but to be hanged.'

"This stedfastness softened the hearts of the Russians. Admiration took place of severity, and they rewarded the fidelity and courage of the brothers with magnanimity. They presented them not merely with life, but sent them free and safely over to Sweden, to the people and to the King to whom they had been true to the death. The King of Sweden elevated them to the rank of nobles, and after this they lived greatly esteemed in the capital of Sweden to a great age."

This relation gave pleasure to Brenner. He promised with a beaming and tearful eye no more to reproach me with my 'Finnish mind.'

The 9th.

Something astonishing on the side of my stepmother and on my side, but not in the way in which my stepmother expected. For it really was no surprise to me that my stepmother conducted me with a mysterious air into her boudoir, and announced herself as '*Envoyé extraordinaire*,' as '*ministre plenipotiaire*,' on the side of my uncle the Chamberlain, in order to treat with me of an alliance between him and me. But it was unexpected by me, that my stepmother said not a word to persuade me to consent to it. On the contrary, she said sundry beautiful, and to me, particularly agreeable things, on the danger of bringing-about or persuading to such things. She wished merely my happiness; I myself must choose that which would lead to it. On one side, I certainly should feel myself happy with a husband like the Chamberlain, and in the '*état*,' in which a marriage with him would place me; but on the other side, it also was certain, that as an unmarried person I should also find myself very well off. Her house should always be mine, and she would be happy to see me there, and so on.—"She had not now undertaken to woo for the Chamberlain, but merely to hear whether he might announce himself as a hopeful lover."

This circumspection of hers pleased me much, because I can thus ward off his attentions, and need not say a word to him, which is contrary to my nature, that little vexatious word, 'No!'

In the mean time he has been good to me, has shewed me kindness and confidence,—it grieves me not to be able to do him a pleasure—nay, perhaps, to be compelled to distress him. How poor is man here upon the earth! I feel myself quite melancholy and humble.

The 10*th.*

And thou, honest Wilhelm Brenner, shalt not hear from me that word of refusal. I understand now thy intentions well; but thou shalt not speak out that aloud which I cannot answer according to thy wishes; shalt not stretch forth thy true hand to see it rejected.——I value thee too highly for that; I think too much of thee for that. I like Brenner greatly; but not so much as I love my own independence, the peace of my soul, and the prospect of a peaceful and care-free future. I will be his friend, but no more. I dread marriage; I dread that compulsion, that dark deep suffering, which the power of one being over another so often exhibits. I have seen so much of it.

I know well, that in consequence of wise laws of our evangelical church, marriage is not an indissoluble bond, but that a divorce can be obtained on various grounds; wherefore the polemic, which from certain quarters one hears against wedlock and con-

jugal life, has reached the highest degree of uselessness and absurdity conceivable. For what pure and thinking being enters into marriage without seriously regarding it, as our marriage formula so beautifully expresses—acknowledging in this act a public declaration of God's thought, and which therefore ought to be regarded as law and rule on earth? If He who only once or twice spoke to the children of earth, and then left them to unfold the meaning of his words—if even He had not by his words strengthened the principle of marriage, which, pure in the early times of the world, had its origin in the incorrupted sense of the human race, yet would human prudence alone lead to the establishment of some law and regulation for marriage, with its glance directed to the children, which are its fruit. The marriage which calls forth in the wedded pair the knowledge of the meaning and object of their union, elevates them thereby to a point of moral greatness, from which the accidental provocations that arise in marriage are easily conquered. And certainly this union would make more people infinitely happy if they allowed themselves to be rightly consecrated by marriage, in its high and holy spirit. Yes, if mankind once rose so high in moral greatness, that marriage might be released from all legal bonds, they would, precisely, by reason of this moral greatness——abide by the marriage.

I know also that very often is the woman the cause

of unhappiness in marriage. I know that many a wife is for her husband, as it were, a cause of living irritation; and for the terror and warning of all bad wives I will write down here what occurred lately in my neighbourhood.

A young, honest and industrious man, who, with a wife and three children, made a good income by his industry, took arsenic a few days ago. Whilst under the most terrible effects of this, his wife would insist upon his drinking sweet milk. But he thrust her from him, saying—

"Let me die in peace! You have gnawed at me for these years like rust upon iron, I can live no longer."

But the wife in his last hours let him have no peace, but heaped upon him reproaches, and demanded, "Do you not know that you have committed a great sin against me and my poor children?"

"You would have it so," replied he coldly, and died. Listen to this, my good women!

No less, my good gentlemen, is it certain that the suffering which I have seen in marriage has proceeded especially from you, and for that reason I will take no lord and master, and will not become a wife.

And shall I on that account be less useful to society? Folly and the belief of fools! Friend, relation, citizen—noble names and occupations. O who is able fully to act up to them!

The 11th.

Again is a sledging-party talked of, and the promoters of it are Lennartson and Brenner. Lennartson will drive Flora, and I suspect that he will take this opportunity of giving her pleasure and coming nearer to her. He pays attention evidently enough to her mood of mind, and this has been for several days in the highest degree disturbed.

The Viking has invited me to his sledge, and I have consented on the condition of his eldest sweet little daughter Rosine going with us. To that he has agreed, but only compelled by necessity. I will not take so long a drive *tête-à-tête* with the Viking, but I will carefully make use of the first opportunity to turn aside his schemes of conquest, and to tell him of my determination of remaining independent, of letting friendship, and not love, be the pulse in the life of my heart.

Selma has declared merrily that nobody shall drive her, but that she herself will go with her mother in their new covered sledge, and will be drawn by their beautiful 'Isabella.' And that thus shall it remain.

There will be a train of some fifty sledges. Selma and Flora rejoice in it—like young girls. The gentlemen equip their sledges with the beautiful skins of wild beasts. We have talked already for a week of nothing else. May the weather only remain favourable.

Yet is it a purely-northern enjoyment, which a purely northern life has—such a pleasure-excursion as this in the clear winter air, under the bright blue heaven, upon the snow-white earth! They fly away so gaily and lightly,—the open ones covered with skins and with white nets, which flutter over fiery, foaming horses, they fly along so fleetly to the play of the jingling bells. And it feels so irresistibly pleasant thus to drive away over the earth in a train of joyous people, and by the side of a friend who participates in every feeling, every impression.

All this I felt yesterday, and yet I have retained an uneasy impression of our party of pleasure. Thus is it with all the pleasure of the world.

Still it was magnificent in the beginning. Our drive resembled a triumphal procession as we drove through the first streets of the city, and were seen and admired by a vast number of people, as well without as within their houses. After this, when it went out of the city-gate into the country, how white shone the snow-fields—how beautiful was the snow through the pine and fir-woods—how we flew like magic over land and lake, whilst the craggy, woody shores fled past us! I was glad and enchanted, and Brenner enjoyed my delight, and that sweet girl between us increased it by her child-like joy.

After a tolerably long drive we stopped at an inn at the Park Well, where we were to dine. Dinner was ready to be served as we arrived, and was quite

splendid and cheerful, but without that offensive ostentation and superfluity which ought to be banished from the society of thinking people. Our hosts, Lennartson and Brenner, were the life and joy of the dinner. Songs also were sung, in which the voice of the Viking produced a great effect. When we have advanced a little in our friendship, I will counsel him to moderate his voice a little.

After dinner Lennartson asked me to play a nigar-polska, and this immediately set the whole company in lively motion with its grotesque, but merry flourishings and jokes. Even Aunt Pendelfelt got upon her legs and flourished about with the rest. Selma and Flora signalized themselves by their grace, although in different ways. At length people must begin to think of their return, and cool themselves before it was undertaken.

A part of the company was already about to move away, when Brenner called my attention to two portraits which hung in the room; the one represented the great Queen Elizabeth of England, the other the noble Princess Elizabeth of Thüringia.

"Which of these would you be?" asked Brenner.

In jesting tone I asked back again, "Have you not heard speak of a person, who when asked whether he would have warm or cold milk, answered, 'might I ask for a little ale-posset?' I must now answer you somewhat in the same way, since I am right joyful that I am not obliged to be one of these Elizabeths,

and choose rather to be that which 'I am,' though somewhat less."

Brenner smiled and said, "but if you must choose between these two—could you well be undecided? How beautiful is not that affectionate, self-sacrificing wife, beside the cold, wordly-prudent Egotist?"

"Granted!" I replied; "but the question always is what a woman loves, and for whom she sacrifices herself. Thus, for example, it always seems to me, that the exclusive love of one human being would be too mean an object for a human life, for the citizen of a divine kingdom. And I fancy that he who sinks himself in so contracted an existence in one individual, gives up the noblest in life."

"Ah! how contracted—and how incomprehensibly vexatiously said is that!" exclaimed the Viking.

"Not so contracted as you think," said I, somewhat proudly, "after that which I have seen of life. And then have I not seen many a young girl, with a rich soul, with a mind open to all that is good and beautiful in humanity, and full of will to work for it; have I not seen how this same girl, some years after her marriage, is shrunk together into a narrow circle of cares and joys—the sense for the general and the whole lost for ever, and more and more compressed into the single and the individual, till she at last had lost sight of her higher goal, and scarcely could lift her eyes above the sill of her own house."

"But my best, gracious Miss Sophia," exclaimed

the Viking; "that is an entirely mistaken, an entirely crazy turning of the question, an entirely insane direction. Why should people for their own sakes overlook the true and the real? Does a young girl give herself away, or is she given away to a dolt or a block of wood, or to any other beast, then indeed she must drive upon a wooden road, and then I am not guilty, and yet less is love in its true sense guilty. Because true love is that which, while it unites two beings with each other, unites them only the more closely with social life and with humanity; right marriages consecrate people for a higher and a richer world; the right home is that where the fear of God rules like an invincible spirit, and all members of it, each one according to his strength and according to his gifts, is made useful for the great home of the world. This is clear as sunlight! I cannot comprehend how people see these things in an oblique point of view, and argue against them accordingly. That, methinks, is really contracted; and pardon me if I say, A LITTLE STUPID!".

"I forgive," replied I, smiling, "because I begin to be accustomed to your calling me stupid; and your description of these connexions in their beauty affects me, but such are seldom found on earth, and I have not seen them upon my path. On the contrary, I have seen and heard so much that is bitter in domestic life, which knits itself up with marriage, that I am become afraid of it, and for my part have

determined not to let myself be bound by it, but to live independently, certain of this, that I in this manner can best accomplish my human mission."

"That you will not," said Brenner, very decidedly. "You mistake yourself. As yet you are young and full of life; as yet the world meets you; as yet you are surrounded by pleasures; but a time will come in which the world will be benumbed towards you, in which you yourself will be benumbed, be frozen for want of warm hearts, of true 'bands which will knit you to earthly life.'"

"Through the power of God I hope neither to be burned nor to be frozen," replied I, smiling. "The human soul also has its sun, which beams high above all earthly suns, and besides this—why should I feel the want of warm hearts as long as my own heart is warm? And that does not feel as if it would grow cold, even if all the snow in the world were piled upon it."

In the mean time we were come down to the ground-floor, where a mass of people were putting on their furs. The light of the full moon shone over the landscape, which, from the height where we stood, spread itself out in winterly pomp. But all was snow-covered and stiff. The trees shone with crystals of ice in the cold moonlight. The cold was severe. An involuntary shudder passed through me. The Viking had taken my fur cloak from the servant, and warmed it on his heart.

"The snow of life," said he, softly and inwardly. "O how you should preserve yourself from it!" he wrapped the cloak around, but it was not this which made me conscious of a soft embrace, warm as a summer wind.

Soon sate we again in the sledge, but the company had separated themselves, and drove in little parties back to the city. Lennartson and Brenner remained together, and then came my stepmother in the covered sledge, with Selma and Mrs. Rittersvärd. We were the last of the party, because the hosts considered it as their duty to watch over the departure of all the guests. As we had been warned that the ice was not very strong, every one had agreed that during the drive over the lake, they were to keep at a distance of from twenty to thirty paces from each other.

The moonlight was beautiful, and beautiful its lighting up of the white ice-fields of the dark shore. Far off in the background we saw the lights of Stockholm glimmer. The drive was romantic, but its effect was lost on me. The little Rosine soon fell asleep with her head resting on my bosom, and the Viking made use of the opportunity to lead the conversation in the direction which I feared, therefore I evaded it with a few short and cold answers. He was vexed, and said provoking things to me, to which I was silent. At length he too was silent. We were both of us out of tune, and with a melancholy feeling I contemplated the passing shore, the clouded heaven,

and the dark fir-branches, which here and there protruded from the ice to shew the open places, and which, in the increasing dusk, resembled horribly fantastic shapes of animals and men. Some words spoken by Brenner had wounded my heart. The gloomy impression of the moment made me feel this deeper—I could not help weeping, but quite silently. I know not whether he conjectured what was passing within me, but after a while he said with a gentle voice,—

"Have I been disagreeable again? Forgive me! Do not be angry with me, good, sweet Miss Sophia!" and he laid his hand gently upon mine. I pressed it without replying, for I could not then speak. Further communication was prevented by a dull cry for help, which forced itself on our ears, and in which we could distinguish the voice of a child, which complained lamentably. Brenner pulled in his sledge.

"Perhaps somebody who has driven into a hole in the ice," said he. "I must see what it is. Might I take you and Rosine to your stepmother's sledge? As soon as possible I will return."

"We will leave the little girl there," said I; "but why should I now part from you, when I probably in some way or other may be helpful to you. No! I go with you."

The Viking made no answer; we looked about for the sledge of my stepmother, and a feeling of anguish took hold of me as we could not discover it.

At that same moment two sledges came driving furiously over the ice, from the point where the cry was heard. In the first sate two boisterous and noisy gentlemen, whose voices, as well as their mode of directing their horses, made it evident that they were in no quiet state. They drove so furiously upon our horse, that if Brenner had not suddenly checked it, probably some misfortune might have happened. A dark cloud concealed the moon, and the deep twilight prevented us from distinguishing the countenances of the noisy gentlemen, but I thought that I recognised the Rutschenfelts in the voice. The other sledge paused a moment, and a voice, which I knew for that of Felix Delphin, said—

"Hold! hold! Really I believe that we have driven over the boy behind us there."

"Ah, a pretty joke!" replied the other, who I would wager was St. Orme; "he only got a little blow, that I will swear. Let the cursed youngster howl, if it amuse him. Let the reins go! else we shall come too late, and the others will get the best part of the carouse from us. See there, now he is still! Let us go!"

And the sledges rushing at the most rapid speed, passed us towards Stockholm.—(N. B. The gentlemen whom I thought I now recognised, had declined to be of our sledging party, on the pretence that they were invited out for this day.)

In the intention of turning to the point where the

cry, although weaker, was still heard, we saw that Lennartson also turned about, and heard Flora exclaim with anxiety—

"Certainly the ice at the edge is brittle, and we shall all go down together."

Lennartson gave the reins to the servant, and whilst he threw himself out of the sledge, called to us to stop and take him with us. We stopped, he sprang upon the sledge beam, and we drove rapidly forward.

We were now on the spot where feeble tones of lamentation made themselves still heard, and the moon shone over a singular group. A young lady in the most elegant winter dress, with bright red feathers, which waved in a white silk bonnet, stood, bending over a boy clothed in rags, whom a servant in livery had raised up; an old man of tall stature, with a staff in his hand, stood near, and stared up towards heaven with blind eyes.

The young lady was Selma, who having heard the cry for help earlier than we, and who seeing the other sledges continue their drive, had prevailed on her mother to turn towards this side, in order to see if they could help. My stepmother remained with her sledge immediately on the place.

The old man related how two sledges had driven so rapidly, that he and the boy had not time to avoid them. The first sledge had knocked the boy down, and the second driven over him, and notwithstanding

their cries, had continued on their way. The old man appeared not to have suffered at all, but the boy was severely hurt; and after Lennartson had in the best manner bound him with our pocket handkerchiefs, he carried him to the sledge of my stepmother, where he was left under the care of Selma. Our servant was commanded to accompany the blind man to his dwelling in the Park, but he was unwilling to separate from the boy, who was his only comfort and his only support since the death of his children, the parents of the boy; and he was for that reason seated with the coachman, and went with us.

We turned now again upon our homeward way, and met Flora, who was slowly driving towards us. Lennartson took his seat again beside her; but I fancy that the return was not truly agreeable to either of them.

On arriving at home Lennartson fetched instantly a physician to the boy, and this morning he is taken into the hospital. He is fortunately not dangerously hurt, and will in a month's time be again restored. In the mean time he is Selma's and my child. Lennartson and Brenner have adopted the old man, whose disease of the eyes is of that kind which admits of an operation, and he may regain his sight.

Flora pouts and looks askew on all this affair, and on the common interest which has sprung up between Lennartson and Selma through their protegé, whilst the dissimilar behaviour of the two young girls on

this occasion, seems to have made a strong impression on Lennartson.

The 17th.

I have endeavoured to examine Felix on the ice-drive and its adventure. He pretends to be ignorant and hurt in the highest degree, but a certain painful confusion in his manner convinces me that I have not suspected him and the others in an unjust manner. I have heard from Åke Sparrsköld, that St. Orme often misleads young men to drink, and then to gamble, and thus wins from them their money; and that he had invited Felix and his friends to an orgie of the lowest kind on the day of the sledging party. I now spoke seriously and warmly, nay, almost sisterly, to Felix, and warned him of this false and dangerous friend. I reminded him of his promise to Selma, and on that which depended upon it. He answered not a word, but looked unhappy, and left us quickly. I fear that he will not turn out well. His more regular life for some time after his conversation with Selma, seems not to have lasted long, and he is so weak that the Rutschenfelts 'do not be beguardianed, Felix! Be a man!' or their jest that 'he is already under petticoat government,' are sufficient to lead him into every possible folly. I have had a prompting to talk myself with St. Orme, and to call forth the good spirit in him; but think! if the wicked one shew his teeth to me. In the mean time I will

let these thoughts concoct yet a while; over-hasty words seldom fall in good ground.

The 20th.

It goes on hopefully and joyfully with our children, the seven-years-old and sixty-years-old. The aged man is operated upon, and it has succeeded excellently. Lennartson was here to-day, and related to us, in his lively way, the particulars of the affair.

The joy of the old man that he could again see the sun and his child; that he again could work, and lay aside the beggar's staff, affected us all. We took into consideration the future of our children, and adopted unanimously Lennartson's plans.

Selma has found means to draw Flora into this affair, so that she now, like the others, takes part in it, and appears warmly to interest herself in it, namely—in Lennartson's presence.

The 23d.

The Baron has received additional honours in titles and stars. As he came to us this evening decorated with the latter, Flora exhibited great joy on that account, whilst Selma and I wished him joy in all simplicity. Lennartson received Flora's exaggerated tokens of joy with coldness, and was, for the rest, not quite in good humour. My stepmother noticed this, and said jestingly—

"It seems as if Lennartson quarrels with his

good fortune precisely when it adorns him most handsomely."

"Good fortune!" said Lennartson, smiling sorrowfully.

"Yes," replied my stepmother, "at least what most people would regard as such."

"Ah!" said Lennartson, whilst he seated himself beside her with a kind of filial confidence, "it is exactly that which vexes me, that people often regard such things as good fortune, and set value upon them, without asking whether they be a sign of merit; whether they have any real meaning;—it makes me angry that it should be so, and that I myself am childish enough not to be rightly free from this weakness. It regularly torments me. But the superficiality of life is so infectious. Therefore I long to release myself from it."

"But in all the world not to quit the service on that account?" said my stepmother, terrified.

"No!" replied Lennartson, "that is quite another thing. I will only be released that I thereby—may come deeper into life. I know well when I could be indifferent to all this outward glitter, and warm and rich from the reward which no human eye sees, from a look, a quiet approval."

"And where is this Eldorado?" asked my stepmother affected, and at the same time suspicious.

With a voice, which was at the same time softened and rendered more full by deep feeling, Lennartson said—

"I had it once in the heart of my mother; I would meet with it in the heart—of my wife; if," continued he, with emphasis, "if she understood me, if she were such as my soul desires, and my heart seeks after. Many a one congratulates me on my happiness in having made my own way in life, and I—consider myself not to have been happy, that I have not yet properly lived—at least, since my earliest youth," added he mournfully.

All this was said half aloud to my stepmother, who was evidently affected, and spoke kindly words regarding the future, though it might not be in a cheerful tone.

I looked at the young girls: Flora blushed deeply; that Selma grew pale, I could merely suppose; because at my glance she rose up and left the room.

Here have I then become acquainted with one of the Lennartson faults of which the Viking spoke. But the way in which he discovered it has made the man only more interesting in my eyes.

The 1st of March.

Brenner will not understand me, will not attend to my hints. He seems as if he would give his heart free play in making an attack on my heart. Well, then! May his, during the combat, only not be wounded. I will not lose a friend in the lover, and a friend so noble and so dear to me as Wilhelm Brenner. I never was happy in love. Where I

loved I have not been again beloved, and where I have been beloved with true affection I could not return the same feeling. But I have to thank friendship, pure-minded friendship, for my highest delights on the earth. A rejected lover may easily become the truest friend, and that he is not so is often the fault of the beloved woman.

In this case it will not be my fault, that I feel in myself. I know nothing more sorrowful than when an acquaintance, which begins in cordiality, extinguishes itself in bitterness; or where warm feelings change themselves into cold ones. Every seed of tenderness which the All-good has sown upon the earth, should unfold itself into a plant and flower; should here sprout up at His footstool, in order sometime to blossom yet more gloriously before His throne. If it be otherwise; if the flower die in its bud, then is it the fault of man, and a very sorrowful thing. I write this in the odour of the lilacs which I have received from my friend, and with a heart that is warm towards him. It is calm and light within me.

Thou that allay'st the restless heart's commotion,
Illuminator of life's midnight hour!
To whom was given the ancient world's devotion,
And even now art our most glorious dower;
Thou who wast by, when Chaos was up-broken;
Who played'st in joy in the Creator's sight;
Thou who wast by when *primal words* were spoken,
And heights and depths gave Being forth to light.
Life's morn and evening star, O Wisdom! brightly,
When I in darkness lay, thy light was shewn;
Since then 'tis well with me, my heart beats lightly,
Burning with love; but, but for Thee alone!

The 2d.

The miserable, misfortune-bringing, poisonous and poisoned Lady-Councillors-of-Commerce! I would that they sat turned to stone up aloft on the hill of difficulty, and could move neither foot nor tongue! I would they had been fettered yesterday. Then should I not have been obliged to go thither to-day with the heaviest burthen which life has, and to come back without any alleviation; then had I not been obliged to sit here as now, and to write with a sort of desperation, whilst tears fall upon my paper rather than the words which I throw upon it, almost without seeing them.

But now came those birds of misfortune yesterday afternoon, and darted down by my stepmother. I was with her whilst I sat at my painting. I felt myself burdened by having to attend to all the movements which were made by the three ladies among our near and distant acquaintances. Already had they gone through a long list of 'they believe, they say, they assert,' when Mrs. P. vehemently exclaimed, "Now for a bit of news which is sure and certain! What think you of our honest Colonel Brenner having last week received 'a basket' from the rich widow, Mrs. Z.? That I know from her own sister-in-law, who related the whole affair to me. She herself, as regarded him, was not disinclined, but the five step-children would have terrified her."

"Yes, the poor man!" said Miss P., "he will not

find it easy to get a wife with that crowd of children; at least not a wife who has money."

"Need Colonel Brenner then, in the choice of a wife, make money so much an object?" asked I, in no enviable state of mind.

"That a man always must who has five children to care for, and who has no other property than his profession," replied Mrs. P. "Brenner's wife had nothing; and he himself, although a man of rank, has been no good husbander of his income."

"Is Mrs. Z. an upright person?" asked I again; and Miss P. made answer,—

"O, the person is well-behaved enough, I fancy; but she has neither head nor heart; but with a fine skin, a handsome figure, and large landed property,* one needs neither head nor heart to enchant. A little vain, a little mad about getting married, is she to be sure——it is an unfortunate passion that, of wishing to get married! I say with Madame de Sevigné, I would rather get drunk!"

"I also," said I; "but is it known for certain that Colonel Brenner paid his addresses to Mrs. Z. last week?"

"Quite certainly is it known, my sweetest of friends! Her own sister-in-law told me of it. Besides this, there are documents in the affair; for it was negotiated by letters, which certainly must have

* Guldåsa säteri, an estate which, according to the Swedish laws, can only be held by a noble.

been very affecting, for Mrs. Z. has cried days and nights over them—there must singly and solely on that account have been a wash of pocket handkerchiefs. But she has her own friends, and will console herself, and think about a certain gentleman without children, and—*à propos*, people say also in the world that Colonel Brenner too will endeavour to console himself, and will seek for his consolation in this house; people assert even that Miss Sophia Adelan would know something more of the affair."

Reddening like a guilty person, and proud as an innocent one, I repelled the charge, and declared myself wholly unacquainted with it. And, as the sisters persisted in jesting with me, my stepmother said, with a graceful dignity which pleased me infinitely—

"As Colonel Brenner has so lately paid his addresses to Mrs. Z., it would very little accord with the esteem which he cherishes for Sophia, and with his own character, if he should so quickly solicit her hand. Besides, I fancy that this match would very little suit Sophia. It is no joke with so many stepchildren. If my Sophia wishes to be married, she will not lack opportunities of choosing among—um, um, um!"

"O, of course! That is certain! When a person has so many charms and talents, and so much property, there lacks nothing; and people talk already of a certain Baron and Chamberlain,—perhaps one may already offer congratulations."

I scarcely was able to give a token of disavowal, and was glad that a servant came to say that the carriage was at the door, in which the Lady-Councillors-of-Commerce took leave, and my stepmother and Flora drove out to pay visits.

"Let nobody come in! say that nobody is at home!" said I to the philosopher (the old, trusty servant of the house, whose business it is to watch through the whole day, half sleeping in the hall), and I threw myself in the arm chair, before the piano, in the ante-room. One single light burnt in the chandelier with a long wick. It was twilight in the room, it was twilight in my own soul.

"It is the property! It is a speculation!"—thought I. My mind was in so painful a state that I was obliged to weep. The image of the Viking was dimmed in my inmost soul. I saw him before, so pure, so noble, so far from all worldly modes of action, and now! But no! I will not submit myself to the thoughts which the news that I have heard awakens in me. "Still! still!" said I to the tormenting spirits, "leave me my faith in him, and let me retain my friend. Besides, why should I believe that he will woo me. He will not. He seeks in me merely a confidant, a friend, a sister!" And I let all the five little children come up before me in order to explain his courtship of Mrs. Z.

The 'Sonate pathetique' of Beethoven lay upon the music desk, and I began to play it. This wild

agitato removed the tumult from my soul, and hushed it; it elevated itself on the streams of sound, and burst with them through all thwarting hindrances to the grave, lovely, all-releasing, all-reconciling unveiling, to the glorious closing notes. So deeply was I absorbed by my music that I did not hear that a conversation was taking place in the hall, which ended in the philosopher opening the door and saying in a voice which resembled that of the ghost in Hamlet:

"Miss Adelan, Colonel Brenner is in the hall, and will resolutely come in. Shall I beg him to go away?"

"Did I not say that nobody was to be admitted?" asked I.

"Yes, he said that," said a well-known voice. "But I said to him that I am already admitted!" And Brenner at one spring stood before me, with outstretched hand, so kind, so joyous, so cordial, that I nearly forgot all the impressions with which I had just then combated, and my heart moved itself towards him.

He gave me a bouquet of beautiful flowers, as he continued, "only do not say to me that I should go away!"

Kindly, but sorrowfully, I said, "Ah, no! Remain here now. My mother will soon be home."

"O, that is not of much consequence to me," said he. "I would now rather talk alone with you."

My heart beat from secret anxiety. He looked at

me, and my appearance must have indicated fully my state of mind, for he was suddenly uneasy, and asked tenderly and with his whole heart, whether I were ill?

"No, I am very well." Whether I was vexed? "Yes, I must confess that; I had heard something which had discomposed me." Whether he might not share it, whether he might not endeavour to be my comforter? I was silent. Should I tell him all? thought I. Yet no! That were indeed a folly. He would fancy that I was in love with him. He renewed his questions with more and more warmth. "No!" replied I, at length; "not now—perhaps at some future time"——Whether I were vexed with him? "Yes—No——He must not ask any more."

"Not ask any more?" exclaimed Brenner. He was silent for a while, and began then again, with a gentle, tremulous voice. "And yet I came now, on purpose, to ask you a serious question, a very important question—a question which has often thrust itself to my lips, and which I can no longer keep back—a question, upon which depends the weal or woe of my life. I came on purpose to ask—Sophia, will you, can you love me? I have long loved you unspeakably! Will you accompany me through life, in pleasure and pain?"

The voice, the look, the expression, even the pressure of his hand, which had seized mine——O what eloquence of the heart! And all this he had conse-

crated the week before to Mrs. Z. And Mrs. Z., without head and heart, with a fine skin and landed property, ascended like a ghost between Brenner and me, and caused me indescribable anguish.

O, if he had but been to me that which he had been only a few hours before, how candidly and how warmly could I not have talked to him; how could I have refused his hand without wounding his heart; how could I have removed the lover, and yet have retained him for ever a friend.

But in the darkness which had now risen in my soul, I recognised neither him nor myself; the whole world was changed. A crippling coldness, a petrifying stupor overcame my whole being; I felt myself turned into a marble image, and therefore I let Brenner talk without understanding him; heard him speak of his children, 'children which it was a delight and honour to have;' heard him say how he and his children would make me happy by love and gratitude; saw him bend his knee before me, conjuring me to listen to him and answer him. But I could not answer, could move neither hand nor tongue; my eyes were still and staringly riveted upon him; yet I felt as if my eyes were filling by degrees with tears. Then he reproached me jestingly with keeping him so long before me on his knees; and with a sudden turn he seated himself at my feet, embraced my knees, and declared that he would not rise till I had given to him my 'Yes.'

This manœuvre had almost entirely overcome me. I was just about to lean myself towards his beloved head, and open my whole heart to him; but at that same moment I heard a bustle in the hall, and the voices of many persons who had entered.

In that same moment I awoke to a full consciousness, and to the whole bitterness of my position.

"Stand up! In God's name, stand up!" said I to Brenner. "Some one comes!"

"The whole world may come!" replied he, with defiance and affection; "I shall not stand up without an answer from you."

A thought of hell arose in my mind; he will surprise thee, he will compel thee; he will remain sitting here at thy feet in order to make it impossible for thee to refuse his hand!

With proud resentment in look and voice I sprang up, and said—

"Colonel Brenner! I have done wrong to leave you so long in uncertainty. Pardon me, and hear now my last answer. My hand and my property I will preserve independent. I esteem no man high enough to give him right and rule over them."

Brenner on his part had risen up—and at my stern reply fixed upon me a look full of inexpressible astonishment. It was as if he could not thoroughly understand me. Merry voices and the steps of several persons approached the drawing-room door from the hall. I betook myself to the door which led to

Selma's chamber. Here, with my hand upon the lock, I turned round and looked at Brenner. He stood immoveable, his eyes directed to me; their expression I cannot describe, and I could not rightly comprehend; but I read in them an eternal farewell; and, with a soul assailed by indescribable and contending feelings, I fled up to my room. That which I felt to be the bitterest and the most painful at this moment was that Brenner and I were for ever separated. I called up anew Mrs. Z., in her whole terrible shape, and Brenner's conduct to her, in order to excuse and explain my own conduct; but then came the remembrance of Brenner's last look—that strange look, which went through bone and marrow, and all his culpability vanished, and I alone was the culpable one, the one worthy of condemnation.

I was interrupted in this combat by Selma, who besought me to come into company. I thought at first to excuse myself; but when I found that Lennartson was there, a thought or suspicion arose within me, and I followed Selma.

I had a fever from excitement of mind. I soon observed that Lennartson's glance was directed to me with an inquiring expression, and soon also he seated himself on the corner of a 'causeuse,' and said in a low voice—

"As I came here this evening I found Brenner alone in the drawing-room, in a strange state, and he could or would not give any explanation of it. Have you seen him this evening?"

"I pray you," said I, and answered his question by another, "tell me whether it be true, as I have lately heard, that within these few days a connexion has been spoken of betwixt Brenner and Mrs. Z.? You are Brenner's friend, you must know."

"I cannot deny it," replied the Baron, smiling.

"Is it true that a marriage was spoken of?"

"Yes, actually was spoken of."

"He has then really paid his addresses to her?"

"Hum! that is again another question," said Lennartson smiling.

"How! Did you not say that a marriage had been spoken of?"

"Does it then follow of necessity that *he* must have made the proposal?"

"Not? I fancied so. I pray you jest not in this affair, but tell me out plainly how it hangs together. It is to me inexpressibly important—more important than I can say."

"Well, then; what I know of the affair is, in a few words, this: Mrs. Z. wished to have Wilhelm Brenner for her husband; he did not wish her altogether for his wife. A third person went with the proposal—and with the refusal to and fro between them."

"O God! is it possible? And—pardon me!—From whom do you know this?—From Brenner himself?"

"No, certainly not; but exactly from this third person, who ought for two reasons to bid adieu to the

office of spokesman. It pleases me, Miss Adelan, to be able to give you an explanation of an affair in which you have been so badly informed. And now—best Miss Sophia, permit me, as Brenner's and your friend, a question. What is the occasion of his strange state of mind this evening?"

"It is my fault! my unpardonable fault!" I could say no more, I was crushed to pieces.

Lennartson was silent; he regarded me with his serious prudent eyes. After a minute's silence, he said gently, almost flatteringly—

"I shall probably see him to-night. May I not take to him from you a message—some kind of greeting?"

"Ah, what is the use of it? He cannot, he ought not to forgive me! We are separated for ever through my fault—through my unworthy mistrust. But, if you will, impart to him this our conversation."

And with this it was ended; but now began for me the pangs of conscience.

O what talisman is there indeed against the bitter crushing feeling of having been unjust towards a noble friend—having cruelly wounded his heart, his dearest feeling; to have murdered the faith in that which he loved—to have disturbed his happiness! And for such a deed no comfort can be found. O Wilhelm Brenner! now I understand thy looks full of condemnation, and full of godlike sorrow over me. Yet when thou knowest that I have bathed my pillow

with tears, and yet in the midst of my suffering felt a proud joy over thee, and thanked God that I can bear thy image clear in my breast, wouldst thou—wouldst thou not forgive me?

I passed the night without slumbering in the least. I waited for the morning with impatience—I hoped that with it Lennartson would come. The morning came, gray and cold, and no Lennartson, and no single sunbeam in my nocturnal soul. One hour went after the other—that waiting was insufferable to me; read I could not, music was to me a torment, and the most common topics of conversation only increased my anguish. All at once the proverb came into my mind—

"That which burns the heel burns not the soul;"

and at the same time the hill of difficulty came before my inmost mind, and it seemed to me a particular refreshment to ascend this. I felt the necessity of calming the soul by the fatigue of the body; and with an advertisement out of the daily paper in my reticule, I rambled in mist and cold towards the South, up the heaven-aspiring mountain, far forth upon the endless street which begins on the other side of the same. Our own state of mind often lends its colour to objects, but on this day my state of mind and the objects which met me had actually a deep sympathy. The advertisement led me to a dwelling where mould and damp covered the walls. Neither was it to be

wondered at that the pale dropsy abode there. On the long ill-built street, I saw a herd of ragged, pale children, old women and aged men, living pictures of sickness, of poverty, and age; and I contemplated misery in all gradations of human life—in all its weeping shadows.

And amid all these shadow-figures there yet probably was not one who would have exchanged his lot with mine, if he could have seen into my heart. Ah! the severest kind of wretchedness is not that which exhibits its rags in the streets, and at night conceals itself in great deserted buildings — it is that which smiles in polite companies, which shews to the world a joyful exterior whilst sorrow gnaws its heart.

Had I been somewhat more joyous of mood, I might have thought with pleasure on the round earthen jugs which many carried in their hands, and on the warm soup which Mercy cooks by the never-extinguished fire, and which now these poor people were carrying, yet steaming, for their dinners.

When I came home, I hoped for some kind of word, of some kind of tidings. But no, nothing! Several hours have passed. Perhaps Lennartson comes this evening.

Evening.

No, he came not. I have obtained by art news of Brenner. HE DID NOT GO HOME LAST NIGHT.

The 3d.

Again a sleepless night. It is again morning. Whither shall I go-day?

"When a man is no longer his own friend, then goes he to his brother, who is so still, that he may talk gently with him, and may again give him life."

These words of Jean Paul awoke in me the desire to go to my Selma, but I was ashamed of the confession which I had to make to her. Then came she to me with her lovely eyes, and asked so tenderly, so troubled. I could do no other than let her look into my heart. And how tenderly she comforted me! How warmly she defended me from my own self-accusations! How clearly she saw before us the hour of reconciliation! Ah, I dare not hope for this! If I could only know how it now is with him, how he feels towards me.

Evening.

I know now. Lennartson came in the afternoon, but not gaily.

Yet it is good that he came. I could hardly have supported such another night. To my inquiring look, he said immediately—

"I have just seen Brenner; I have communicated to him our conversation here that evening."

"Well then, and he—" asked I, almost lifeless.

"He said, he had himself imagined that some kind of misunderstanding must have been the occasion of —what he did not say."

"And besides that—said he nothing?"

"He added, if anybody had said to me anything bad of her, I should not have believed it."

"And that was all! Said he nothing more?"

"No!" said Lennartson; "but it was evident that he had suffered much in mind, and suffered still. What unfortunate misunderstanding has put you both so out of tune with each other, separated two beings who I fancied should——but they are not separated. That is impossible. I know Brenner's heart. Give me a word, a cordial word for him, and—let me conduct him to your feet."

"Impossible! I pray you do nothing now in this affair. You would not wish that yourself, if you knew all. Tell me only—do you think that Brenner cherishes any hatred towards me?"

"Hatred is a feeling which cannot easily find place in Brenner's heart, and certainly never towards you. The words which he says of you, he speaks with seriousness and tenderness."

"Thus I may hope then that he does not abhor me. This is much. I thank you from my heart for your kindness."

"Thank me by letting me take with me a soothing greeting to my friend. He looked to me as if he had not slept for several nights, and would not be able to sleep for yet more."

"Tell him that neither have I slept, since——and now let us not talk further on this affair. It belongs

to the things which must alone depend upon our Lord's guidance."

Lennartson bowed with quiet seriousness, and as he saw me weep he took my hand, and spoke gentle words with the voice of an angel. O how good is he too!

It is Twelve at Night.

I am now calmer. I have arrived at certainty. It is then ended, this friendship which gave me so very much pleasure, which was to last into eternity, ended through my fault.

* * * * *

I found in the stream of life a costly pearl, but I threw it heedlessly away. I deserved it not.

* * * * *

'If they had told me anything bad of her I should not have believed it.' What a crushing reproof for me is there in these loving words!

But I deserve all this. Therefore I will bear it all without complaint. I shall not sleep this night, perhaps not for many nights. Knew I only that he slept.

Without, it is restless. Clouds driven by the northern tempest fly over the castle. The lamps on the bridge and on the quay flicker; their light trembles in the agitated waters; one after the other is extinguished in the storm. Poor flickering flames, good night!

The 7th.

Brenner has set out, on the business of the fleet, to several of the sea-port towns of Sweden. He will be absent several weeks. That is good.

It is cold to-day, clear air and cold. The snow lies upon the ice of the Riddarfjerd, upon the southern mountains, white and still—still and cold as indifference. I will lay it upon my heart. Yet no! that will I not. Let it suffer still.

I was too proud of my philosophy, of my strength and prudence, and am—punished! Burn therefore thou holy pain, thou purifying fire; burn to the very roots this selfish vain temper. Burn and consume!

In the Evening.

I shall overcome this suffering; I feel that I shall overcome it, for I have a clear, inward presentiment that he has forgiven me, that he feels and thinks mercifully towards me. And for the first time I feel the necessity of the mercy and the compassion of a fellow being. Such presentiments of the state of feeling of persons who are dear to me I have often had, as well in bad as in good, and they have never yet deceived me.

The sentiment which united Brenner and me has really not been of a common kind, nor can the overhastiness of a moment annihilate it. It is deeply based in the nature of our being. And I know it. Wilhelm Brenner, we shall yet once more meet and

be united in sincerity, in harmony, even if it first be when the scene of this life is ended; I know it, and never have felt more certain than in this moment, when we are apparently more separated than ever.

I have written to Brenner. Words like those which I said here. They will meet him when he returns to Stockholm.

To-night the stars glow brighter. No cloud overshadows them. Good-night, Wilhelm! To-night thou wilt sleep, to-night I also shall sleep, and to-morrow I shall again wholly live for mankind, for the interests which surround me. Thou hast given to me an example of activity, and I will follow it.

The 11th.

And the drama which is being acted in my neighbourhood demands truly all attention. I seek still for the thread which can lead the captives out of the labyrinth; but that St. Orme is the Minotaur I see plainly; and it seems as if Flora's prophesying of herself, that she was possessed by his evil nature was really about to be fulfilled. But why should Selma become her victim; why should the sylph lose her wings in the struggle? Selma has been for some time an actual martyr to Flora's perpetually unhappy temper, who seems to have a certain delight in tormenting her with ill-humour, with severity, and with absurd suspicions. Selma bears this with won-

derful gentleness, but—the joyous song is silenced, and the light dancing gait becomes ever stiller.

Yesterday, I poured out before her the vial of my wrath against Flora.

"Forgive her," prayed Selma, with her beautiful, tearful eyes, "she is herself so little happy!"

And this is true. My stepmother, who does not understand Flora's condition, but who would willingly see all around her joyful, endeavours to cheer her by all kinds of dissipations and pleasures; but these now appear to have lost all power over Flora, whilst her evil demon strikes his talons ever deeper into her life.

Towards evening, when the few visitors had left us, and we ladies of the family were together with St. Orme, Flora stood a long time sunk in thought before the portrait of Beatrice Cenci.

"Do you think of copying that lady, that you contemplate her so exactly?" asked St. Orme, in his scornful, disagreeable tone.

"Perhaps!" replied Flora, in a voice which sounded almost terrible. "Then," continued she in an altered tone, "I endeavour to fancy how she felt in mind."

"Before or after the murder of her father?" asked St. Orme as before.

"Afterwards," replied Flora. "Before, I understand; that I know."

"How, my sweet Flora, how can you enter into such horrible thoughts?"

"Yes, I can do so," replied Flora. "She had

attempted every thing—every thing, St. Orme — to free herself from her unhappy condition; she did not express her pangs. She was reduced to the most extreme point, was reduced to despair—in short, I understand her deed; but after that—afterwards—"

"Why yes," rejoined St. Orme, "afterwards, she thought on the preparation for her own death, on the scaffold, on the executioner!"

"It is related," continued Flora, "that at the moment in which she went to death, at the moment when she must ascend the scaffold, a stream of words burst from her lips, so full of joy and thankfulness, so full of what is most beautiful and most sublime in the human soul, that they who should have consoled her, were dumb, and their pity changed itself into admiration: it is said that never was her beauty more touching, her look more beaming than at the moment when she, as a penitent, but ransomed sinner, met death enfranchised and victorious!—nor is that a wonder to me. But I do wonder how she felt; ah! how she felt herself to be free! free and happy! I do wonder how she felt, I do wonder how she felt, I do wonder how—"

Flora repeated these words several times like an insane person, and sank suddenly to the floor.

Our astonishment was great. Flora was carried into Selma's chamber, and here our attentions soon brought her again to consciousness; but only to fall into a hysterical state, after which she only sunk into repose after the lapse of a few hours.

When she again awoke it was night. She lay still, her eyes fixed upon Virginia's portrait, that hung at the foot of Selma's bed (on which Flora lay), and said passionately to herself—

"She too was lovely and unhappy; she too died in the bloom of her age, died of a broken heart. But she died, killed by her still suffering—like many a woman, died without glory and revenge. Beatrice was the happier of the two."

"The Eternal Judge only knows that," said I, with gentle voice.

"Yes, what do we know?" continued Flora. "I know nothing, excepting that I am more unfortunate than these two. It is strange, but for some time methinks, that thoughts on a bloody action, on a murder for instance, have something refreshing in them. A great change must take place in the souls of men who have done something terrible—something that admits of no return, no uncertainty, no fear, no hope more. Then, indeed, might the juggling spirit depart, and the human being comprehend himself! It might become calm and cool in the heart, when the hour of death is near, and all is past from earth; feelings might arise—feelings of humiliation and subjection, and then—there perhaps might come some angel of the Lord, and kindle a light in the dark soul ere one died. But thus will man die! Die, be laid low in the black earth, moulder, turn to dust, be trampled of men—ha! no! no! I will not die. No. Why

is it so, dark within me? why do you let me lie as in a funeral vault? Bring me more light. And Selma! where is she? She used to love me. But she has left me, like all the rest!"

"Never! never!" replied an affectionate voice, and from the depths of the alcove, on the other side of Flora's bed's-head, arose slowly Selma's white-garmented beautiful figure. She took Flora's hand in hers, and besought with tears—

"O Flora, Flora! if you yet love me, hear what I have to say to you. You are day by day more unlike yourself; there lies some heavy secret at your heart which makes you unhappy. O speak Flora, tell us what it is—tell us all! You know how we love you. How possible it will be for us to find out some means of consoling and calming you! Oh, confide in us! How free will you feel when you have opened your heart, and have become clear to those who love you!"

"Clear!" repeated Flora, "and if I were to open my heart, and it were to appear merely darker to you than before! Selma, how should you bear that?"

"Ah! I could bear all, except seeing you so unhappy and so changed as you are!"

"You think so," said Flora, "but you deceive yourself. You belong to the good, to the discreet, who abominate every thing that is unusual and eccentric, because they consider it bad, because they do not understand it. They cannot look the reality in the face without trembling; they do not love,

except through illusions, which they have no strength to—but forgive me, I will not be severe. I myself need help and forbearance. Help me, you cannot, Selma, nobody can—but you can soften the struggle. And now—will you read something to me, something which will calm me?—what have you there? The hymn-book! Read something from it, if you will. It is a long time since I looked into such a one."

As I left the two young friends, I heard Selma read with a voice which she endeavoured to make firm.

How the whole earth reposes

The next day Flora was better; but Selma's countenance bore the traces of a deeply-depressed mind. I proposed to her, after breakfast, to go up to the Museum to see some new statues which had lately come there. She willingly consented, and that Flora declined the invitation to accompany was not unpleasant to me.

We had not been long among the noble works of art before I saw the young pupil of Ehrensvärd become cheerful, and whilst contemplating the beautiful and the sublime, her soul freed itself from the burden which bowed it down. I acknowledged with joy how a cultivated taste for art or nature can release the human soul from the pang which is called forth by the pressure of circumstances, or by the excitability of the heart. Yet he cannot always be released from it, neither should he be. There are sufferings which

are more elevating than all enjoyments, I mean nobler. These must not be annihilated. They may free us, they may give us wings. Even the larva of suffering can receive wings, can fly in the night, and be lighted by its stars, and bathe in its dew.

A soul-full brightened melancholy displaced more and more the suffering, depressed expression of Selma's countenance, as my observations excited her to think and to express her thoughts.

At Niobe's statue I said, that Niobe appeared to me too unfeeling; I wished to see in her countenance more despair, more anger.

"She combats with higher powers," replied Selma; "neither revenge nor hope are possible to her. Besides, this is the first time that she knows misfortune; and it comes so suddenly, so mightily, that it overpowers her; she cannot suffer much, she is stunned. See! observe her from this side; see the expression of trembling pain about her mouth. One sees that there needs only one movement, only one arrow now, and she suffers no more; she is turned to stone."

I looked at Selma. There was at this moment a strange resemblance between Niobe's expression and hers. It seemed to me that thus would she suffer, thus turn to stone. But God defend my young sister!

At the antique head of Zeno I said, "Do you not see in this countenance, as if it were a prototype of Christendom?"

"Yes," replied she; "it is the renunciation, but without the exaltation."

She would not turn to stone; thought I again, with a look at her countenance beaming with soul, she would free herself, she would conquer herself. The sylph would not lose her wings for long.

We now heard somebody whispering near us—

"Lieutenant Thure does not go to the ball to-night. It is very vexatious."

"Nor the royal secretary, Von Bure, either. Yet he told me that he would come for my sake. But one cannot depend on the gentlemen. He had as good as engaged me for the first waltz. I will be properly ungracious the next time that he comes, and will render himself so civil."

"Yes, it seemed as if you had made a conquest ——Do you not think that the marble head there is like Von Bure? Do you know what sweet thing he said to me last evening?"

The sweet thing was said so softly, that I did not hear it. We had already recognised Hilda and Thilda Engel, who were complaining of their lovers before the bust of Septimus Severus. They were now aware of us, and we mutually saluted to each other. As it now began to be cold in the marble gallery, I proposed that we should take a walk towards the park, across the Skeppsholm, and we asked the Engels if they would accompany us. 'They would indeed, gladly, but——four ladies without one gentleman—how would that be?'

Selma and I assured them, laughing, that it would

be excellent; especially if we went two and two; and we wandered off, each with an Engel (angel) by her side, but had considerable weariness therefrom.

Outside the park we met Mrs. Rittersvärd and her daughter. They were cordially friendly, and so merry that it infected us. Mrs. Rittersvärd was much better as regarded her health, and Helfrid was quite happy to be again after a long time in the fresh wood. It was glorious. The snow melted in the noon-day sun, the fir shoots gave forth fragrance, and lichens and mosses grew greenly fresh in the field, and on the tree stems. Helfrid was an old acquaintance of all these, and related in answer to Selma's and my questions, so much of their lives and peculiarities, as excited a great desire in our minds to become better acquainted with these children of nature. In the mean time we wished Helfrid joy of this her knowledge and fresh spring of enjoyment.

But the Engels became ever more and more sullen, and I recognised in them that lamentable poverty of soul which our mode of education often fosters, and which often causes people, in the midst of treasures of art and nature, to have thought and memory only for a——ball lover. Thus were we now, six ladies, and—no gentleman! Fate was cruel to the poor children. Their looks animated themselves, however, as two young gentlemen, arm in arm, approached us, and I heard them whisper the names of Thure and Bure. But Thure and Bure greeted, and—passed by! The Engels looked desperate.

Again a gentleman approached us; and this one passed us not by, but, after an exclamation of joyful surprise and friendly salutation, accompanied us back to the city. It was Lieutenant Sparrsköld. But he walked beside Helfrid Rittersvärd. Hilda and Thilda walked with one another.

At a hint from her mother, Helfrid invited them and the rest of the party to go and drink a cup of chocolate in the shadow of her hyacinths. The Engels declined the invitation with a look of ill humour, but Selma, the young Sparrsköld, and I, accepted with pleasure the friendly invitation.

In the shade of Helfrid's fragrant hyacinths we drank excellent chocolate, and had a lively and interesting conversation on the way, of best improving and using life and time.

Nobody was better pleased to hear about this than the good old lady, who finds even now life to be so affluent and so full of interest, that she wakes herself every morning at six o'clock from fear of wasting time, which for her flies too fast.

Young Sparrsköld declared, jestingly, that people did a great deal better to sleep; and with that kissed her hand with filial, yes, almost childlike tenderness.

Helfrid looked on both with tears in her eyes.

A horrible catastrophe changed this scene of love and goodwill into one of horror. A dull pistol-shot was heard, and seemed to have been fired in the room under that where we were. Sparrsköld sprung up.

"It was in Captain Rumler's room!" exclaimed he; and, as if seized upon by a horrible foreboding, rushed from the room. A quarter of an hour after this he came up again, very pale. "Captain Rumler has shot himself! All was already over with him. People had for some time talked of his deranged affairs, and of his inclination for strong liquors; he seemed already to have laboured at his own ruin. This was now accomplished.

Excited and horrified in mind, we separated.

"He was one of Felix's intimate acquaintance," said Selma, on our homeward way. "May he not ——" She did not conclude.

It was terrible news with which we had now to surprise my stepmother.

The 13th.

Captain Rumler's unfortunate end quickly flew through the city. The Lady-Commissioners-of-Commerce informed us to-day that 'people said that he had handled too freely the money of the regiment; that he could no longer conceal this, and would not live over his disgrace; that one and another young gentleman, sons of rich families, who were involved in Rumler's affairs, had fled. People said that several occurrences similar to this would follow.'

From the misfortune, however, one good thing has arisen. Åke Sparrsköld was Rumler's next successor, and received the company after him. Nothing then

hinders any longer his and Helfrid's union, and the happiness of the whole family.

The 14*th.*

Now also have the Rutschenfelts driven off! 'God preserve Felix!' with these words my stepmother entered at noon, and was so cast down by the news and so uneasy about its consequences, that all thoughts of startling me, and all the Metternich deportment, were forgotten.

Among those who have made their escape for debt, are the Mr. Bravanders (the same who on New-Year's-day challenged the devil so industriously to fetch them).

The 15*th.*

"Has Felix been here? Do you know anything of him?" asked Lennartson to-day, almost as he entered the lobby; and as we answered in the negative he appeared vexed, although he tried to conceal it. St. Orme, the Chamberlain, and a few other gentlemen, together with Lennartson, were here to dinner. The conversation soon turned to the Rustchenfelts again, who in part had taken flight, and in part were suspected of designing to take flight. Many persons were mentioned whom they had deceived, who had been robbed by them of the little which they possessed; families who were sunk in the deepest sorrow; mothers, brides, whose hope was annihilated,

whose future was for ever darkened. The old, venerable father of one of the fugitives had had a stroke in consequence of his grief—but it would be going too far to draw forth all the misfortune which was now passingly spoken of.

Lennartson was silent in the mean time, but I gave vent to my heart in a few excited words. St. Orme, who always sets himself in opposition to me, shrugged his shoulders at the tragical way in which people took such every-day affairs, the fuss which people made about a young man's youthful follies. He, for his part, pitied them sincerely, but he judged no man; people must not be too severe against the young. They must have time to run out their course; after this they returned to sense and prudence."

"That is very well said," remarked the Chamberlain, with a fine voice and fine satire, "and for my part, I will always say, 'the blessed (late) Rumler,' although I would not take an oath that the blessed man really is blessed; still I think that people should pay their debts and live decently in the world, and I think that it is rather venturesome to go over into the other, like Rum——like the blessed Rumler."

Lennartson now took up the affair, and with great seriousness; and fixing a quiet firm glance on St. Orme, he censured the conduct which had been described, and the temper of mind which could find it innocent. He described the operation of this on social life in general; he described a people in its

decline—laxity of principle, its poisoned root—lust of pleasure and frivolity, taking the upper hand—the sanctity of a promise despised—order and honesty fled—with them confidence, security, readiness to oblige, all pure, all beneficial sentiments—all human ties poisoned—the sanctity and fresh gladness of life fled for ever. Thus was it with the old nations as they advanced towards their dissolution, towards their ignominious tardy death, a spectacle for pity and contempt. Thus will it be with us, if we do not seize with earnestness on life and on ourselves. "I wish," continued Lennartson, whilst his eyes flashed and the words came like thunder from his lips, "I wish that all honest men would brand with their abhorrence, and the better part of social life with its scorn, all those idlers, those young deceivers, who sacrifice all for the satisfying of their bad passions. I know only one character more worthy of punishment, more despicable than these, and that is he who, under the guise of cleverness, poisons their principles; under the guise of friendship seduces to misery, whilst he makes them the instruments, the victims of his selfishness, of his low schemes—in one word, the snake in social life, the calculating seducer!"

Was it the intention of Lennartson to hurl a lightning flash at St. Orme, or was it the bad conscience of the latter which made him struck; but certain it is, that for the first time I saw him deprived of his scornful assurance, for the first time saw him smitten

and confused. The blood had vanished from his cheeks. He attempted to smile, but the thin lips trembled convulsively. Flora saw him with amazement, and a sort of enjoyment! She seemed to feast herself on his pangs. She laughed—hideously—there was a stillness as of death at the table, and at once my stepmother made the move to rise, although the dessert had not been served, and all followed with readiness.

St. Orme soon recovered himself; one heard him soon after laughing and joking with the Chamberlain, but his laugh was not natural. He soon left the company, after he had cast a crafty, poisonous glance on Lennartson.

When our guests were gone, we were all of us extremely out of tune. I endeavoured to fix my stepmother's attention by one of the questions of the day, but it did not succeed.

It succeeded much better with the 'Lady Councillors of Commerce,' who came full of news, which they were as desirous of imparting as we of hearing. It concerned for the most part the Rutschenfelt company, and the disorder and misery which the fugitives had left behind them; the causes of the ruin of young men were also spoken of—among these were often mentioned unwise parents, bad example, neglected oversight in youth. With all these sorrowful relations, Mrs. and Miss P. helped us through the long evening. During this, two messengers had been

sent to inquire after Felix, but they had not met with him at home.

After people had separated for the night, Selma and I lingered, as we often do, among the pictures in the inner ante-room, and contemplated them by the soft lamplight. Selma stood long before a painting after Guido Reni, which represents St. Michael, who, with the flames of anger in his divinely beautiful countenance, plants his foot upon the breast of Satan, and pierces him with his spear.

"Why does my Selma look at this picture so long?" asked I, joining her; "it has something quite horrible in it."

"But something quite beautiful also," replied she. "It teaches us to understand what a holy anger is. Look at St. Michael's countenance! Tell me, does it remind you of—is it not like"—Selma paused, and crimsoned with confusion.

"Lennartson, as we saw him to-day," said I, ending her sentence, and Selma's look told me that I had expressed her thoughts.

We were now disturbed by some one who opened the door of the drawing-room. It was the figure of a man wrapped in a wide cloak. This was thrown off, and we recognised Felix Delphin. But how changed he was! The pale, disfigured countenance had scarcely a trace of its former beauty.

"Selma!" said he, with an agitated voice, "do not be afraid of me. I will merely say farewell to you, before—"

"Before what, Felix?"

"Before I leave thee and Sweden for ever! O Selma! I wished to see you once more, that I might pray you to think of me, and to pray for me when I am far from you!"

"Felix, why must you go?"

"Why, because I am—ruined, ruined by my weakness, by my folly. Property, health, honour, all are lost! I cannot, I will not live over my disgrace here."

"But is there no help? Cannot Lennartson—"

"No! once before he rescued me from the hands of the usurer. Then I gave him my word of honour never again to be betrayed into them. I have broken this. Rather would I die than meet his look!"

"But I, but Flora! We are your nearest relations; we have some jewels—"

"Hush, good angel! I am not sunk yet so deep as to avail myself of—and besides, what purpose would that serve? Ah, Selma! all must now be ended between us. Here, have you your ring again. I am not worthy of you. Pray Lennartson to forgive me! Greet Flora! May she be worthy of him! And you, good angel—heaven bless you! Farewell!"

He kissed the folds of her dress, and was about to rush out, but was prevented by a man who stepped in the doorway and seized his arm with a stern—

"Whither, Felix?"

It was Lennartson. Felix gasped for breath, but

in the next moment he made a violent effort to tear himself loose and to fly, but the Baron held him with a strong hand, and said sternly—

"Be quiet, boy! no stupidity! Will you make a scene before the people outside? Besides, this avails you nothing now. You now *must* follow me!"

"You will dishonour me!" stammered Felix, pale with impotent frenzy.

"*You* will dishonour yourself; but *I* will save you even against your own will," said Lennartson.

"It is too late!" exclaimed Felix.

"It is *not* too late," answered Lennartson. "I know all about you and I promise to save you; and to this end I demand only one thing from you, that you at this moment enter into a bond with me, body and soul, and take not one step without my will or knowledge, but obey me in all things. And in the first place, I desire that you follow quite quietly to my carriage, which stands before the door."

Lennartson had said all this with a low voice, as if he would be heard by Felix only, but the strong emphasis which he laid upon his words caused me, although I stood at a distance, not to lose one of them. Felix seemed annihilated; his will was subjected to that of a mightier than himself, but he could scarcely endure himself. He supported himself almost fainting against the wall.

"Lean on me," said Lennartson, quickly and tenderly, as he took the youth in his arms—"why are

you afraid? Am I not your friend, your fatherly friend? Confide yourself to me! Come! be a man!"

Felix took courage truly at these words, and said mildly—

"Do with me what you will, I will obey."

Lennartson seeing that he hesitated, seized his arm, nodded to us kindly but deprecatingly, as we were about to call for help, and with a look which said 'be calm,' led the unfortunate young man away.

Selma threw herself into my arms agitated by excited feelings. I did not leave her through the night, which past sleeplessly for us both, and I have written this in her chamber.

The 17th.

Felix is ill, but they say not dangerously. They have bled him, and Lennartson has watched by him through the whole night. Flora has also come this moment from him, and I am glad to see her really excited and uneasy about his condition.

In the Afternoon.

Lennartson has just been here, so good, so full of consolation! Felix's affairs are not nearly so bad as he himself imagined. A sudden influx of his creditors, who were alarmed by the flight of his friends, their threats, his entire want of money, together with his ignorance of the real state of his affairs, had occasioned his despairing determination. Lennartson was quite

sure of being able to save him out of his embarrassments, although various difficulties were to be overcome.

As we expressed our vexation about the trouble and the time which this wretched business would cost, Lennartson said mildly—

"May Felix only allow himself to be saved by this grave warning! I will then not complain about that which has happened, neither on my account nor on his!"

"How good you are! How infinitely good you are! Ah, that Felix, and we all of us, could only once rightly thank you!" With these words, Selma turned herself involuntarily to Lennartson, with tearful and beaming eyes.

He seemed surprised, and his cheeks coloured as he said—

"Such words from Miss Selma? Can I deserve them? But I will do that, will do any thing which in any way can contribute—to make you happy!"

There was melancholy in the earnestness with which he said this, whilst he took Selma's hand, and looked deeply into her eyes. But her eyelids sank hastily, and she grew pale, whilst she, as it were, retreated before his searching, warm glance. At this moment Flora entered, and threw upon both a look of flaming jealousy. Selma withdrew quickly. Lennartson was still and abstracted, and soon went away.

Flora then turned to Selma, and said cuttingly,

"that was indeed a very affecting scene, which I disturbed! Might one inquire what kind of tender outpourings took place? Silent? It looks as if you were all in a compact against me. Selma blushes like a guilty person. You also Selma, you against me also? Yes, then stand I solitary, forsaken."

"Flora! Flora! No such words if you will not kill me!" cried Selma, with the expression of the most violent pain, and rushed out.

"Flora!" said I, "you are really not deserving of such a friend as Selma."

"Let me be!" replied she, "I do not trouble myself about the whole world."

I followed Selma, and found her in the room, fallen upon her knees, and with her head bowed in her hands.

"Selma!" prayed I, "do not let Flora's absurd words go to your heart. You yourself know, and so do we all, how innocent you are."

"No! no!" exclaimed Selma, with vehemence. "I am no longer innocent! O Sophia, it is that which makes me unhappy. I am false towards her. I feel it now. Innocent indeed as to all intention, all wishes; but not as to all feelings, all secret thoughts. ——O Sophia, I am guilty!"

"That are you not!" said I confidently; and I now used all my eloquence to reconcile the young girl with herself. I made it clear to her that she could not annul Lennartson's connexion with Flora; nay,

even that she might sacrifice her own happiness to promote that of the other. This Selma was obliged to concede, and she raised her head. Then I said to her that such a love as hers to such a man as Lennartson was not a sentiment of which any one need be ashamed. It was at the same time both noble and ennobling. And at last I hit upon a happy thought, that of representing myself as a rival of Flora's, but as an obdurate one, because no noble female mind could remain indifferent to manly worth and manly amiability like his; and I, on this ground, gave myself full permission to love Lennartson.

Selma could not help smiling at this, and smiling through tears, she threw her arms round my neck. I left her, reconciled in some measure to herself, to find Flora. She also was in her chamber; and as I entered I saw her hastily concealing in her bosom a small white bottle which she held in her hand; red and white alternated upon her cheeks. As I saw how deeply unhappy she was, I talked gently with her; spoke of Selma's purity and tenderness; of all our wishes to see Flora calm and happy. I prayed her with warmth to meet us, and to have confidence in us.

Flora listened to me with a depressed brow; and said all at once, with warmth—

"Sophia! I have been for some time fearfully unhappy! I am afraid of myself. There are moments when I am capable of anything merely to obtain the

end—the end! Yes, if it then were merely at *an end*, for ever at an end! But I know——or more properly, I fear, that which may come afterwards! Ah, that nothing can end! I am so weary!—If you have any love for me, do not leave me much alone! I cannot then answer for myself. How the sun out there shines so whitely upon the snow, as if there were no confusion and darkness in the world. It is all one! Will you go with me to the Unknown? Perhaps she may have a composing word for me."

I was willing, and soon ready. We went. But as we neared the house of the Unknown, we found on the narrow path fresh fir-tree twigs strewn upon the snow; it led us to her door, which was fastened. The Unknown had the day before removed to

The death-still, fir-crowned couch.

in the Solna churchyard.

"This door closed also!" said Flora darkly, as we betook ourselves homeward. But now opened themselves the floodgates of my eloquence, and in the deep desire to comfort Flora, and in the strong feeling of what life has of great and good, I said many things—well, I believe. But people flatter themselves always in that way. It did not, however, fail entirely, for Flora listened to me calmly, and as we came towards home, she pressed my hand with a friendly, almost melancholy, "thanks, Sophia!" Yet she remained reserved as before.

Ah! I preach wisdom to others, and yet have acted unwisely myself; I try to give comfort, and yet there is no peace in my own heart. At home is disquiet. My stepmother shews coldness towards me, and yet I know not why.

Wilhelm! Thou with the rich, warm heart, thou who wast open to me at all times, at all times affectionate towards me, where art thou? O what a pang to have wounded thee, to have removed thee! For thee—at thy feet fall these burning, penitent tears. Thou hast never shed such;——well for thee!

The 23d.

Heavy, black days,—days in which life resembles a sleep, where nothing will go forward; not even self-improvement, which ought never to stand still! There hangs, as it were, a heavy cloud over us. Flora is, as usual, torn by restless spirits, and Selma is no longer what she was.

My stepmother is in an excited state of mind. I see plainly that the singular conversations which I have sometimes with one and another in the family, do not please her. She looks as if she suspected me of exciting commotions in the house.

Felix in the mean time is better, but his health appeared deranged by the irregular life which he has led. He recovers slowly. Lennartson endeavours to animate his mind, and to cheer his spirits. He often spends the evenings in reading Sir Walter Scott's romances to him.

True are the words, 'nobody is so good as the strong.'

The 25th.

A little joy! 'Åke Sparrsköld and Helfrid Rittersvärd are declared betrothed!' With these words my stepmother startled me to-day, and was herself enlivened by the occurrence, which has given great pleasure to her good, old friend. My stepmother will, in order to celebrate this betrothal, give in the next week a soirée, which will redound to the honour of the house. Hereby she seems to wish to repress various unquiet reports respecting the affairs of the family which have began to circulate, but as I hope—without foundation. But so long as St. Orme comes sneaking here, and has private conversation with my stepmother, I am not sure. Another bad sign is also that our 'spasmodic acquaintance' have not been seen here for some time.

The 29th.

The cloud sinks lower and lower; it becomes more and more twilight around us. My stepmother wished yesterday to have a new carpet in the great anteroom for her festival. The old one has long been disagreeable to her, and has besides this several spots; in one word she wished altogether to have a new and handsome carpet. But Selma opposed herself mildly, and said beseechingly, "Ah, let us have

no great outlay just now, not till we see how our affairs stand!"

From this I remarked with terror that Selma (who manages the domestic economy of the house) cherished suspicions which she had hitherto concealed from me.

The Philosopher came in at that moment, and said in his gloomy voice—

"The bills, your honour," and laid a bundle of papers on the table. My stepmother threw an uneasy look upon it, and pushed it from her as she said to Selma—

"My sweet girl! look them through—I cannot do it now. It is horrible what a miserable voice Jacob has sometimes. He quite terrifies me—I confess that at times it makes me quite poorly."

Selma embraced her mother silently, took the accounts, and went with them into her own room. My stepmother was still and thoughtful. She leaned her head back on the sofa cushion, and there was something in her handsome pale countenance that went to my heart. It was late in the evening, and the lamp burned dim. Methought that shadows of care and anxiety gathered around her, and that thereby her face became ever paler, ever older. Quiet wishes for the repose of the grave, for all, pressed through my soul.

The 3d of April.

To-day after breakfast, as I was alone with my

stepmother, she introduced the affair of the carpet. She could not bear the dirty spots. Besides this, we were to have on Wednesday an elegant musical soirée. How could one let such a carpet lie on the floor; what would people think of the family that could endure such a one? A new one should be purchased on this very day. I attempted to oppose it a little, spoke of the expense and of the superfluity of such an outlay, and so on; all with the greatest friendship and mildness; but my stepmother took it very ill, and exclaimed at once—

"I must pray you, my best Sophia, not to be at all troubled about my private affairs,—and I wish also that in other cases you would not too much rule in my house. I have hitherto been able to rule pretty well and to provide for myself and mine, and I do not think I am quite incapable of doing so still. Emancipate yourself as much as you like, that I cannot prevent; but let me also have my freedom, I beseech of you!"

The absurdity of this sally excited and troubled me at the same time. I sate silent with tearful eyes, and was thinking whether and how I should answer, when we heard St. Orme's voice without in the hall. With a kind of shock my stepmother started and said to me, "tell him that I am not well, and that I cannot receive him," and with that she hastened into her room.

"Alone!" exclaimed St. Orme, as he entered,

where are the others to-day? I come to say farewell to you for a few weeks. I am intending to go to W——s for a little fresh air and hunting. But I am afraid you will certainly miss me very much?"

I was silent. Jest I could not now, and I could not say to him seriously, as I thought, "it pleases me indescribably that you are going away."

"You are silent!" continued St. Orme, "and who is silent consents, it is said. Where are the other ladies? Will they remain invisible to-day?"

"My stepmother is unwell and can see no one," replied I; "Flora is gone to her brother, and Selma is otherwise engaged."

"Then it looks as if we should have a *tête-à-tête*, continued St. Orme. "I have no objection, because I have one or two things to say to you. Listen, my best cousin! I have several reasons to believe that you are not of the best service to me in this house. What have you against me, if I may ask? Perhaps I have not been polite enough to you, have not flattered you enough? In the mean time, I advise you as a friend, not to intrigue against me, you have "*affaire à trop forte partie;*" you would do better to come over to my side, and persuade Flora to consent to that which she cannot escape."

"I do not understand you," answered I, somewhat proudly, "neither do I understand intrigues; but I mean always to speak out openly my honest

thoughts when any one asks for them, and neither flattery nor threats shall prevent my doing so."

"Superb, and Finnish in an especial manner," said St. Orme, as he looked at me, with a cold, sarcastic mien, which would have confused me, if it had not operated in the contrary manner, namely, steeled me. "I see how it is," continued he a moment afterwards with contemptuous coldness, "and I will tell you how it will be. All your Finnish magic arts will be in vain, and the conquest will remain mine yet. Adieu! many greetings. Forget me not!" With this he seized my resisting hand, and shook it with a malicious, triumphant look.

Flora entered at this moment, and her suspicious mind saw a friendly alliance in that which was almost the contrary. She cast some lightning glances upon St. Orme and me, and turned her back to him as he approached her. He then said coldly—

"Adieu, belle cousine! au revoir!" and went.

"How! have you and St. Orme become suddenly such good friends?" asked Flora, as she approached me with almost a wild look. "Have you made a compact with him to betray me? Confess it, confess it honestly, Sophia! You do not wish me to be Lennartson's wife, you consider him too good for me; you wish him to have another. Deny it not! People do not so easily deceive me, and I have seen through you for a long time. But to enter into complot with St. Orme — I did not think that you would have carried your hatred to me so far."

This new injustice caused me more pain than anger. I said warmly, "O Flora, how unjust you are to me! But you are unhappy, and I forgive you."

With these words I went out of the room.

I found that it was my destiny to-day to be misunderstood at home, and felt a certain longing to go out. I dressed myself therefore, and went.

It was as if the heavy cloud which had rested so long above me now sent down all its lightning flashes upon my head. It seemed to me that I must resemble the scapegoat, and should be burdened with other people's faults and failings; a thousand excited feelings boiled in my breast, till I came out of the city-gate, and felt the air breathe cold upon my brow.

The spirit of spring had breathed upon the earth, and it thawed strongly,—foot passengers walked carefully upon the melting ice; glittering drops fell from the roofs. The heaven was the colour of lead; but here and there opened themselves the eyelids of the clouds in order to send forth some pale beams of light, which resembled smiles in tears. The air was still and somewhat heavy, but there was a twittering of hundreds of little birds which played in the leafless trees, and these had I know not what strange odour, which reminded me of the sea, and of fir woods, and was full of spring life. I remained standing on the field covered with trees which is directly opposite to the castle, and drank in full draughts of the spring-air, listened to the rushing of the river, and let my eyes

contemplate the manifoldly changing world. Then was it to me as if the spirit of the heaths of Finland blew upon me, and awoke the child-feeling in my soul. Clouds and mist fled, and like singing larks, uprose the bright, the great thoughts which make life beautiful. Conscious purity exercised itself strong in victory, and—in one word, I was as if changed.

I know not whether it is—as one of my friends says—'better to be a magic spirit than nothing;' but certain is it, that there lives in me somewhat of that magic nature which, from the very ancient times, is said to have its home in my native land. This *something* I do not comprehend myself, but I feel it as a *something wonderful*, a momentarily upflaming strength, which *will* and which *can*. In such moments nothing is impossible to me. I am conscious of a power to loose and to bind the spirits of others. *Primeval words* stir within me; yes, there are moments when I feel that I can enchant human souls to me, and—I do it! In my younger days, I had much of this heathenish magic. This since then has been baptized in the spirit-waves of suffering, christened in the fire of love; but rooted out it is not, and it arises in me sometimes quite unexpectedly. I know that it has played me many pranks; but I know also, that when reason has not helped me, magic has, and has given to me both words and songs, to sing myself free from the chains of life, and has enabled me, like the old Wainemoine, to sing both sun and moon into the

thread of my life. And there are moments in which I can turn every stick which may lie as an impediment in my path into a winged steed, upon which I can ride out of the narrow chimneys of life—not exactly to Blåkulla—but forth into the free, fresh, blue space.*

The difficulty in such life-strong moments is the not having any difficulties to overcome, no impediments to conquer, no hero deeds to achieve. That was my sorrowful condition. Because to seek out and purchase a splendid carpet to lay at my step-mother's feet, a carpet with a heaven-blue ground, strewn with stars, flowers and magic figures, would require no magic power. In the mean time I felt a delight in it; and whilst in spirit I pleased myself with overcoming St. Orme, Flora, and the whole world, and wrote letters to all my friends—for it is astonishing what I do at such times—I wandered without any plan on the quay by the river, and saw the ice-blocks break up on the Riddarfjärd, and the heaven softly clear itself over the liberated waters. Downwards along the river parterre my 'spiritus' led me, and towards the side where the waves boomed most mightily.

Ah! it was there where I once stood with Wilhelm Brenner, heard the waves rage in his breast, and saw a heaven clear itself in his eyes. And these remem-

* In case this manuscript should fall into the hands of strangers, I will herewith expressly declare, that this must not be taken literally.

brances seized on my soul with painful power,—but —gracious heaven! Was it indeed true? Was it he who again stood there, leaning over the iron railing, and looking down into the foaming deep? It was *he!* One look was sufficient to convince me of it, and I softly approached him. The magic arose again within me. I knew that he could not escape me, knew that I at this moment should have power over him. What I felt, of life and will and warmth within me, no words could express; but all this I laid in my hand, and I laid it softly upon his arm. He started up as if touched by an electric spark, and looked strong and full into my face. I looked quietly at him, and merely whispered—

"Wilhelm!"

He continued to look at me, but his glance changed; it became inexpressibly heartfelt, and with a sigh from the depths of his soul, he said—

"Sophia, is it thou?"

And we were *thou* and *thou*, for we were wholly one at this moment.

Again he said slowly and softly, "is it thou, Sophia? It is a long time since I have seen thee."

"Art thou still angry with me?" asked I, and my tears fell, for I saw by his countenance that he had suffered.

"I cannot be so," answered he, "I cannot be so if I would. Thoughts on thee soften my soul, and when thou lookest on me thus with thy clear, lovely

eyes, then methinks that all is good. Thou knowest thy power well, Sophia."

"O Wilhelm! then we are friends, friends for ever. It cannot indeed be otherwise if my faults do not part us. I never had a brother, but I have wished very much for one. Be to me a brother!"

He answered not, but looked at me mildly, although gravely.

But I was happy in this mildness, so happy to have again found my friend, and to be able to feel again the strong inward harmony which united us, that I regarded this new compact as ratified, and talked to him of it out of the fulness of my heart, how it had been between us, and how it yet would be; of the exalted strength and sweetness of friendship; of its power to ennoble the heart and to beautify life. He heard me calmly, but he replied not. At length he cut short the discourse rather abruptly by saying—

"Hast thou been comfortable at home, since I last saw thee? How do Lennartson and Flora go on? What is St. Orme doing?"

I was happy to open my heart to Brenner, and to be able to tell him what it had endured during his absence. When he heard of St. Orme's behaviour and threats, the Viking raged, and was about to leave me, in order to call him to account.

"He has left Stockholm," said I hastily, "and does not return for some time." 'Take council of the storm how to still the tempest,' said I to myself,

whilst the Viking grumbled at St. Orme for his intrigues, and at Flora for her want of integrity, and with me for not having cleared up the business, and for not having earlier communicated to him an affair which so nearly concerned Lennartson.

"Now there again," thought I, "I shall always be blamed for misfortune."

"The only thing," continued Brenner, "which consoles me is the secret persuasion that it would be good for Lennartson if he were well rid of Flora. She is at bottom not at all suitable for him, and I am very much deceived if he do not himself feel this, and secretly, in the depths of his heart, incline to another;— what thinks Sophia? Is not thy sister Selma the one whom he loves, and who, according to my thoughts, is formed to make him happy?"

I could do no other than tell Brenner, that I had secretly his suspicions and his wishes; but Flora lay near to my heart. The rich gifts of her soul, her excited and unhappy condition, had fettered me to her.

"When St. Orme comes home again—" said Brenner. He did not end his sentence, but I heard in the depths of his soul that he would compel him to speak out for good or bad.

We were now by my home, and as we were about to separate, I said beseechingly to the Viking—

"Thou wilt come again to us, to me, my brother Wilhelm?"

"Yes! I will come."

"When?"

"When thou wishest it."

"To-morrow?"

"To-morrow!"

"Thanks!"

He pressed my hand kindly and warmly as before, and with a happier and lighter heart than I had had for a long time, I hastened up to my room, that I there in stillness might sing Te Deum out of the fulness of my soul.

I then thought about establishing peace with my stepmother; but for this purpose I must go to work in a diplomatic manner.

People who are intrinsically good always speedily repent of the violence and unreasonableness into which their tempers have misled them; and I now know my stepmother sufficiently to be certain that she was vexed with herself for her excess towards me, and would gladly make the *amende honorable*, if this were only consistent with her character and her dignity. To come to her now with the new carpet would have been to humiliate her; she could not have borne this and her own injustice. The affair must be managed in another way.

I went down, therefore, and, as if nothing had happened, entered the room where my stepmother was sitting on the sofa with a gloomy and annoyed look, whilst Selma sat reading in a window, and pre-

sented myself unaffrighted, as in great want of some black silk for my dress.

"I certainly believe that I have somé of the same kind," said my stepmother rising up hastily from her sofa, and going to her drawer, where several pieces of black silk soon shewed themselves, which she, with the most friendly zeal, besought me to take and use. And I allowed myself to take them, together with some beautiful black lace, which I did not want, but which my stepmother, in the warmth of her heart, felt a necessity of giving to me; herewith she ended with a little gratuitous treatise on prohibitive-measures, luxury, and national economy; and of this I also obtained more than I wished. But I was in a grateful state of mind, and received this like the rest, as was right.

As now my stepmother was become so considerably lighter by articles of luxury and learning, I could without any scruple burden her with the carpet; but I determined to wait with it till the next morning. I was now for myself satisfied with the position of affairs, and thought that my stepmother was so too, and betook myself, with peace, to my own room. It was, therefore, a surprise to me as I saw my stepmother enter, and heard her say with the most amiable kindness, and with tears in her eyes—

"I must beg Sophia to forgive my violence this morning: I cannot tell how I could be so disagreeable. But thou knowest well that thy old mother

does not mean so ill, though she is sometimes irritable when many things weigh on her temper. In the mean time I can hardly forgive myself——"

This was in truth too much, and I was very near falling at my stepmother's feet, in deep reverential feeling. We, however, sank merely into each other's arms, but never rested we with more heartfelt affection on one another's breast; or, more correctly, that was the first time that we ever had so rested. I was deeply excited, according to my ancient usage on such occasions. My stepmother was less so; but she spoke well and beautifully of herself and her failings, and of our duty in all ages of life to amend our faults; she thought on this subject with Madame Genlis—"I cannot bear to hear elderly people say, I am too old to mend. I would rather forgive young ones if they said, I am too young! Because when one is no longer young one must especially labour to perfect oneself, and to replace by good qualities what one loses in the agreeable."

I did justice inwardly to my stepmother and Madame de Genlis,* and noted down the words for my own account; and satisfied with one another, and somewhat satisfied with ourselves, my stepmother and I parted.

* But I beg pardon of my stepmother and Madame de Genlis, it is Madame de Sevigné who has said these good words in one of her letters.

The 4th.

The carpet was spread out this morning by the servants of the house, and received my stepmother as she came in to breakfast. She was as much surprised and pleased as I could have wished, and Selma regained her former temper, and danced before her mother upon the stars and flowers of the carpet.

This little scene has diffused some look of joy through the house.

'By presents and exchange of presents is friendship cemented,' says one of our prudent old bards.

My stepmother is now full of joyful thoughts respecting our soirée on Wednesday evening, and has desired us, the daughters of the house, to make a handsome and elegant toilet.

April 5th.

The Viking has received the command of the frigate Desirée, which sails in spring to the Mediterranean. He remains out perhaps two years. This news startles me. Why will he—yet perhaps it is best so. In the mean time it is hard to me.

The 8th.

Yesterday was our soirée, and right beautiful it was and turned out well. Flora, who since St. Orme's absence has seemed to breathe more freely, had again one of her times of beauty and bloom. She was dressed as when I saw her at first, in crimson gauze. Selma in light blue crape, and I in white

muslin and lace. My stepmother contemplated us with pleasure as we assembled ourselves in the room before the guests came, and was proud of her daughters, whom she called *les trois Graces*, and said that I looked 'vestal-like.'

A quantity of beautiful flowers adorned the room—it was right festal and beautiful. The new carpet glowed under our feet, and warmed my stepmother's heart.

Such an evening has its fate, like every thing else in the world; and if it be not worth while to place much importance upon it, still it is pleasant if the fairy of joy and not of *ennui* holds the sceptre.

A great deal depends upon whether any one in the company can or will take the magic staff in hand; and the sylph did that this evening, and continually spun her invisible flowery chains around the company. As my stepmother herself received all the guests in the inner ante-room, all collected themselves there, and it was much crowded and very hot. Selma therefore took the arm of Helfrid Rittersvärd, and proposed to her and some other young ladies, that 'they should go and found a colony' in the other ante-room. They emigrated, and others of the company soon followed them, so that the colony, as Selma jestingly remarked to her young friends, flourished very much in a short time. Gentlemen and ladies did not divide themselves into separate herds as is the usual and wearisome way in our northern assemblies, but joined

in little circles, and endeavoured mutually to be agreeable to each other, and a lively and a noisy conversation arose. That we had with us some literary and scientific notables, some 'lions' (N. B. of the noblest breed), added importantly to the splendour of the evening. My stepmother was brilliant. Helfrid Rittersvärd and her bridegroom looked inwardly happy, and her agreeable, easy, and calm demeanour diffused as usual gladness around her. A skal for her was proposed by my stepmother at supper, and was drank with solemnity.

Flora's sister, 'the beauty,' looked this evening uncommonly little of a beauty. One saw plainly that the charm of her youth was over, and that the time approached when people would say, 'she does not please me.'

For my part I never thought much of Flora's sister, and I never found that she had more than two thoughts in her soul, 'the theatre and dress.' But there dwelt this evening on her countenance an expression of dejection and secret pain, which made me seek her out when she withdrew from the animated drawing-room into my stepmother's room, which was merely lighted by a shaded lamp and adorned with white flowers. In this pretty blooming little world sate the fading 'beauty,' supporting her brow upon her hand. I spoke friendly words to her, and my voice must have testified of my sympathy, for by degrees she opened her inmost heart, and this had now interest for me.

"I feel," said she among other things, "that I have sacrificed too much to the world. The world and mankind are so thankless! I have wished too much to please people. This will now no longer succeed. Now that I am now no longer young, nor rich, nor have any longer that which pleases or flatters them, they withdraw themselves and leave me alone, and I—I know not whither I should turn myself. Methinks the world grows dark around me—I feel as it were, a fear of spectres—it is so empty, so desolate—I have nothing which interests me—the days are so long—I have *ennui!*"

The bitter tears which followed these words, expressed more strongly even than words the lamentable in the condition of the complainer. And what, indeed, is heavier to bear than the emptiness of life? What indeed is more horrible than that twilight in life, without a star in heaven, without one single little light on earth?

But if one cannot kindle for oneself such a little light? If one can borrow no fire from a good neighbour? Ah! light and warmth, objects of interest, activity and joy, present themselves so abundantly in life, that nothing is more difficult for me to comprehend than that any one can suffer from *ennui.* One must in that case be bound hand and foot, and then one must be released by friendly hands! And a liberated soul, to whom life presents itself in its beauty and its greatness—how glorious!

Like a balloon filled with the air of life felt I at this thought, ready to ascend up aloft, and to carry the Beauty with me on the journey—to the sun. I began to talk (as I thought, particularly like the Book of Wisdom) about life and its objects, about mankind and social life, of the relationship of the individual to the whole, and so on; and then turned from this to the particular sphere of life of my auditor, and proposed to her that the should adopt a couple of orphan children, and educate them for good and happy human beings.

The Beauty on this looked at me with a pair of large astonished eyes; "she really had never thought of that," said she, rather coldly, and as if a little affronted at the proposition.

I then spoke of interesting oneself in public institutions; of the happiness and honour of managing such benevolent establishments, and thus to benefit society by their life and activity. I mentioned my wishes and schemes of living active in this manner; I spoke of one worthy object, of the excellent institution for the care of outcast children, and proposed to the Beauty in my zeal, that the next day she should go with me to visit it. Then for the first time I became aware of her looking at me with a countenance that seemed to say, 'is this person actually insane?' and I then observed too that I had strained my sails too high. Half smiling at myself, I endeavoured to direct my course towards regions

which lay nearer to the sphere of the Beauty; but I found her to be so strange and stiff towards every thing which appeared to me beautiful and cheerful, that I felt myself quite without counsel, and only began to breathe freely when I saw the Chamberlain approaching us. With the zeal with which a person turns from an enemy to a friend, turned herself the Baroness Bella from me to my uncle, and acknowledged with animation all those politenesses which he shewed towards her, and among the rest, that he had lent her his box for the last representation of Norma. "I am so full of gratitude," I heard her say to him.

"Ah, my best cousin," replied he in his jocular tone, "it would be a deal better if you were full of chandeliers! For I just now need such for one or two rooms, and I know not where to get any that are suitable."

The Baroness Bella answered laughing, "that although she herself was no furniture-magazine, yet she could give him the address of one where he could get quite divine chandeliers."

The Chamberlain was indescribably glad to be able to get divine chandeliers, and was still more glad to be enlightened by the glance and taste of the Baroness Bella. A party was arranged for the next morning to see the chandeliers, and with a side-glance at me, my uncle besought the Beauty to make use of his box at the opera for the next *abonnements-dby*.

She became still fuller of gratitude, and he still fuller of politeness; I felt myself more and more superfluous during this *tête-à-tête*, and left them somewhat melancholy—but a little amused also.

I returned to the remainder of the company. The Viking was there but in a grave and almost gloomy humour; he talked with nobody, and did not approach me. That grieved me; the more so, as I had not seen him since I had heard of his approaching and adventurous journey. I would gladly have said something to him; but had not the courage. I had this evening no magic tokens in me, but was merely quite an ordinary woman. I saw by the look of the Viking that it was stormy within him, and that made me afraid.

They asked me to play something, and as I seated myself at the pianoforte and saw Brenner approach, it occurred to me that I could converse with him in sound, and in this way would say to him what I could not clothe in words. I selected therefore one of Felix Mendelssohn's 'Lieder ohne Worte,' whose character is, that under suffering and combat it expresses a something victorious, ascending; a song, a poem, the peculiar beauty of which has always deeply spoken to my soul. I played too with my whole heart, and wished to infuse into Brenner the feelings which animated me, and to elevate us both above earthly struggles and earthly sufferings. And I thought that he knew, that he understood me.

Lennartson, Selma, and several others had assembled round the piano, and listened to the music. When I had ended, Brenner's honest glance met mine. Lennartson said to him—

"That piece reminds me of the history of your Egyptian vulture, Brenner! Tell it us, and Miss Adelan shall say whether it do not contain the words of this song."

Brenner now related—

"It was in Egypt, near to Thebes. I rambled one morning out into the surrounding desert to hunt, and happened to see a vulture sitting not far from me, among the ruins of fallen monuments. This bird is known for its strong power of life, and is dangerous to approach when it is wounded; it has a strength almost incredible. I shot at him, and hit him on the breast, and as I believed mortally. He remained however sitting quietly in his place, and I rushed to him that I might complete my work, but in that same moment the bird raised itself, and mounted upwards. Blood streamed from his breast, ~~and a part of his entrails fell out~~, but notwithstanding this he continued to ascend still higher and higher, in wider and wider circles. A few shots which I fired after him produced no effect. It was beautiful, in the vast silent wilderness to see this bird, mortally wounded and dyeing the sand with his blood, silently circling upon his monstrous wings higher and ever higher; the last circuit which he made was unquestionably a quarter

of a mile in extent; then I lost sight of him in the blue space of heaven."

"Ah, my stars! To have been in Egypt," now said the Chamberlain with his refined voice, "and to have seen vultures and crocodiles, and such things there! That must have been very interesting."

"Ah! tell us something more about Egypt and the crocodiles there," exclaimed little Miss M.

"Is social life cheerful in Egypt? And how do they carry on conversation?" asked the royal secretary Krusenberg.

I do not know how Brenner answered these attacks, for I left the circle as they began. During the course of the evening we did not come together again, but I saw by his looks, which were often directed to me, that his heart was full; and so, to say the truth, was mine likewise. Brenner's approaching journey, the images which the music and the history of the vulture had called up, agitated me powerfully.

Was it a secret wish of us both, or was it chance merely, I know not in the least—but when all the guests had taken leave, and my stepmother, with Selma and Flora, had accompanied the last out, and now tarried with them in the hall in conversation, Brenner and I found ourselves alone in the white-flowered boudoir. We stood both of us silent; he excited, I embarrassed and depressed.

"Thou wilt take a journey," said I, at length.

He answered not.

"It will be a great journey," said I again; "wilt thou be long away?"

"Yes!" replied he, with half-suppressed vehemence. "Yes, I shall remain away a long time. I journey because it is too stifling for me, too confined for me, at home; because if I would live I must seek out free space; because I must hence, to where I no longer see, no longer hear thee!"

He seized my hand and pressed it upon his eyes, and I felt that it was bathed with tears. "Oh!" continued he, "this is childishness! But let me dream for a moment! It will soon be past. Be not afraid, Sophia! I will, I wish nothing more than to see thee for one moment and to be happy in loving thee, and that I *thus* may love thee, although thou hast rejected me. I never loved any one better; I have been happy in the feeling, in the foolish hope that thou shared it with me, that we were made for each other, that thou wouldst wish——but it is past! And after this, my love, near thee, would be my torment. When the storm in my breast has laid itself to rest, I will return to my children and to thee. Think of me when I am far from here—think that my heart belongs not to those which thou mayest despise! Weep not; I do not complain. I wish not to have loved thee less. Upon the waves of the ocean, or in the deserts of Africa, I shall feel myself rich in this love. Wish me not freed from it if thou

wishest me not a misfortune. I shall love thee now and for ever. I challenge thee to let it be otherwise, but—it is the last time that I shall speak to thee on this subject. And now farewell! Farewell *my* Sophia! God bless thee!" And before I was able to bethink myself, he had embraced and——left me.

That was a tempest. I was not calm after it; I was not calm for a long time. But if he have found peace upon his stormy sea, I should be satisfied that——

The 15th.

It is many days since he has been here. That is sad, but I dare not murmur. He does that which is right and manly. This tender but proud heart will not complain, will not shew its wound; but like the bird of the wilderness, will conceal itself and its pangs in the open, lofty space, where no human eye comes near. He is high and noble-minded, but I—?

A peace pervades the house which we have not known for a long time. This is occasioned by Flora's more calm and cheerful state of mind. But how long will this continue?

The 19th and 20th, in the Night.

Yesterday Flora was rather unwell, and on that account staid at home from a dinner-party, where my stepmother went with Selma. I have a peculiar friendship for invalids; think that they are my children; and treat them in a manner under which they

commonly prosper. It was therefore a little pleasure to me to stay yesterday with Flora, and whilst I tenderly and jestingly took the care of her on myself, and we spoke of various horrible things in our great hatred, our hearts neared each other more than they had ever before done. In the afternoon I read aloud to her whilst she lay upon the sofa in the inner anteroom. As I made a pause in the reading in order to rest myself, Flora said—

"You are quite too good, Sophia. And if I were but good, that is to say, if I were calm and satisfied, then perhaps I should be able to thank you as I now cannot.——I am not a bad person, but——but one may be driven out of oneself, one may become insane, if one be hunted and followed as I have been for some time. Have you not observed a great change in me in the last few days? That is because my pursuer has left me at peace. I have known nothing about him for some time; I do not understand—— can it indeed be possible that he has left me for ever? —that I am liberated? Ah, that it might be so! You should see a new ——"

"How is it here?" inquired a clear, friendly voice; and Signora Luna shewed her face at the door. She is always a welcome guest, and though I now wished her in the moon because she had interrupted a conversation which had a great interest for me, still she was received as usual, and threw herself comfortably into a corner of the sofa, and continued with friendly talkativeness.

"It is rightly pleasant to me that I find you two alone, because I shall sit myself down here for the afternoon, and talk about one thing and another which lie at the bottom of my heart. Do you here at home know what report is circulating through the city?"

"Of what? of whom?" inquired I.

"Of Flora. People say that she is to marry St. Orme, and accompany him to Constantinople, where he goes in spring as minister. Can it be possible?"

"I truly do not know;" said I, with a glance at Flora.

Flora turned pale. "The rattlesnake is near!" whispered she, "I hear him coming."

"Ah!" why should not people know things which pass before their eyes?" said Countess G——, half impatiently and half jestingly; "when all things come round then Flora does not herself know whether she be betrothed, and with whom. But what I know is, that I will do all in my power that report may have said that which is untrue. Flora is my own cousin, and I love Flora, and I do not wish her to be unhappy, and unhappy she will be with St. Orme. He is a bad fellow; that I know. He sacrificed his first wife, and he will do the same by the second too —depend upon me—there is nothing which drags down both soul and body more than an unhappy marriage."

With this the beautiful eyes of the Countess G—— were filled with tears.

At that moment we heard doors violently opened, and proud steps go through the room, and the great Alexander soon entered the apartment where we were sitting. After he had shortly greeted Flora and me, he turned towards his wife, and said with a domineering air—

"I fancy my friend, that you heard me say this morning that I wished you not to go out this afternoon, but be at home when I came from dining at L——'s."

"Ah, my best friend, I had quite forgotten that. I did not know that the affair was so important."

"Important! It is not my custom to say anything without good reason, and what I said this morning I had well considered, and had sufficient motive for. The determination of a man cannot be deranged by the whims of a woman, and therefore I hope you will be so good as to follow me home immediately."

"My best Alexander, let me stop here quietly, as I am come here. I sit so excellently, and—I have something of importance to talk with my friends about. I will come home to you when this is ended. Let me for once do in the world as I wish."

"Not at all! you will be so good as to accompany me immediately. And if you will have a good reason for it, see here, *I will it!* tout simplement."

"But I also have a will," exclaimed Signora Luna with suddenly kindling energy, whilst her eyes flashed like actual moonstones, "till now it has lain asleep,

but if you teach me to use it, it may become stronger than yours. And now I *will* stop here, and not go hence till *I* will. And if you agree not to this separation, I shall soon seek a longer!"

The great Alexander was evidently greatly confounded by this sudden outbreak of will and passion in his usually passive wife. He appeared to be afraid before it, and murmuring something about "ladies' absurdities and caprices," he withdrew.

Scarcely was he gone, when Lennartson came. Countess G—— wished not to see him in the excited state in which she was, and went therefore into another room. There she said to me, after she had composed herself—

"It will be the best that I go away after a little while. I wish not to annoy him in earnest, but only to shew him that he must not go too far with his power. There is much that is good in Alexander, and there would have been much more had he not busied himself so much with Aristotle. Aristotle and logic have quite bewildered him. It is no use such men liking to humiliate women; then they are directly tyrants, and I shall shew Alexander—but go in Sophia, methought Flora looked anxious as you came out; go in, and do not trouble yourself about me;—I will go my way softly and quietly when I think that it is time, for he must wait a little while; afterwards—but go in, go in!"

"I followed the injunction, curious to see what took place between Lennartson and Flora."

When I came in, Flora was reading a letter which Lennartson seemed to have given her, and he stood in the window with his serious eyes inquiringly fixed upon her. She was quite pale, and said at the moment in which she laid down the letter—

"I cannot read it—it is black before my eyes! Read the letter aloud to me, Lennartson; Sophia may willingly hear all!"

Lennartson took the letter and read aloud with a firm voice. It contained a warning to Lennartson not to form any connexion with Flora, together with an exhortation to break off such a connexion in case it were formed. Flora was already bound by the *ties of love and honour* to another, and proofs of this would be made public if this exhortation were not attended to. The writer would unwillingly resort to extremities; and if Lennartson quietly withdrew from Flora, then every thing which could impeach her should be buried in silence. The letter was subscribed 'Anonymous,' and was written evidently in a feigned hand.

No longer in a condition to control herself, Flora exclaimed with frenzy—

"Mean, crafty, detestable St. Orme!"

"Then it is *he!*" said Lennartson, with a flaming glance, "it is he who is this disturber of peace! I have suspected it long; and now Flora, now I *will* know what right, what ground he has for doing so. This hour must end our connexion, or cement it for

ever. I have more than once besought for your full confidence—to-day, I must *demand* it."

"You shall know all," exclaimed Flora, with determination—"and you shall be my judge. But, O Thorsten! remember that even God's highest judgment is—mercy!"

Lennartson made no reply; he sate grave and dark, and seemed to wait for Flora's confession.

"Well, then," replied she, whilst she seemed powerfully to compel herself, "all then may be said. This St. Orme, when he was in Stockholm five years ago, paid his homage to me, and acquired—a certain power over me. His bold confidence, his talents, his powers of mind, which I then regarded as quite extraordinary, made an impression upon me. I fancied that I loved him. He misused my blindness, my inexperience, in order to seduce me into an exchange of letters, and the promise of eternal love and the like. St. Orme however troubled himself but little in the fulfilment of the promises which he made to me. I was at that time poor; and he left me for a journey to Paris, whence for a long time I heard nothing of him. In the mean time I became acquainted with you, Lennartson, and learned what real love is. I regarded myself as forgotten by St. Orme, and forgot also him and my childish, foolish promises. Ah! I forgot the whole world, when you, Lennartson, offered me your heart, and life dawned for me in new beauty. But I was now rich, and

St. Orme came again and asserted his old pretensions. He had forgotten Flora, but he called to mind the heiress. "And I knew well that he sought not after my heart, but after my property; I loved him no longer, but—but I was obliged to conciliate him and to operate in kindness upon his hard heart, in order to obtain those imprudent, unfortunate letters which he had in his power, and which he dishonourably threatened to produce against me if I did not break off my engagement with you, and consent to give him my hand. See then, Lennartson, the secret, the many months of darkness, contention, and opposition, of my existence. I hoped for a long time to be able to conquer him; I have combated long—but this hour shews me that all is in vain. St. Orme has driven me to the utmost extremity; to this confession, which my pride, my womanly shame, my love to you Thorstën, made me shun more than death. And now that all is said, and that this burthen is cast off from my heart—now I wonder that I should feel it to be so horrible; for Lennartson, you cannot regard a youthful indiscretion so great—you cannot for some foolish letters condemn me, deprive me of your love!"

"Have you told me all, Flora, *all?*"

"I have told you *all.*"

"Farewell, Flora!" He offered her his hand, which she held fast, and exclaimed with anxiety—

"Where? in mercy—in pity for me, tell me where you are going? What you will do?"

"By one means or another to get these letters out of St. Orme's hands, and place them again in yours."

"Thorsten, you are my redeeming angel!" replied Flora as she threw herself on her knees before him.

Lennartson was gone already.

Selma came home alone. Her mother spent the evening with Mrs. Rittersvärd. Selma was in part made acquainted with that which had occurred, and heard it with astonishment and disquiet; yet most of all she seemed surprised that Flora had not earlier opened her heart, and disclosed all that it contained to Lennartson. When she heard Lennartson's last words she was confounded, and exclaimed—

"By one means or another, Flora? And you have let him take this resolve! You hazard his life!"

"Merciful heaven! is that possible?" cried Flora; "I never thought of that. But no! St. Orme would not venture——"

"St. Orme will venture every thing to obtain you. Lennartson to release you. St. Orme is known for a fortunate duelist; Lennartson shuns no danger, and I know that he regards duels in certain cases——Flora, Flora, what have you done?"

"And what would you that I should have done? Would you have had me sacrifice myself?" asked Flora gloomily.

Selma wrung her hands in despair.

"Fortunately," continued Flora, "St. Orme is not in Stockholm, and——"

"Envoyé St. Orme is without, and desires to speak with Miss Flora," announced the Philosopher now with an unearthly voice.

Flora turned pale. I fancy that we all turned pale.

"Go, Flora, go!" besought Selma almost commandingly—"go and speak with him. Prevent their meeting—save, save Lennartson!"

Flora looked at Selma with a dark expression, and turning to me said—

"Wilt thou go with me, Sophia? I will not again be alone with this man, but I will speak with him yet once more—I will attempt the utmost!"

I followed Flora. St. Orme stood in the large ante-room. He looked calm and self-possessed; went up to Flora, and wished to take her hand. She avoided this proudly, and cast upon him an annihilating glance.

He observed her coldly, and then said, "I see how it stands, and you also will soon see. Well then, what do you say? But—could we not speak without witness?"

"No! because I will not be again alone with a man like you."

"Aha! that sounds severe. Well then! You must complain of yourself, if any thing comes out which you would rather have had concealed."

"You are a mean slanderer, Adrian St. Orme!"

"Flora Delphin, let us avoid injurious words—at least, till there be further occasion; now they serve

no purpose. Let us now talk candidly and reasonably. Let us look at the affairs as they are in their nakedness and truth; for what is the use of kicking against necessity? You have no better friend than I, Flora, and I can prove that thus I have been true to you spite of your whims. I have always behaved openly and honourably to you, even in telling you that you *must* be *mine;* that I would defy heaven and hell to prevent your becoming perjured. My love and my mode of thinking are of another kind to those of ordinary men; they take higher paths, and have higher aims. My will bows not either to weather or wind;—what I will that will I, and——"

"Spare your words, St. Orme," interrupted Flora, impatiently. "I know you now, and I will no more be befooled with fine speeches. Tell me in short what you wish, and I will tell you what I have determined."

"What I wish, that you know—my love and my wishes you know. Let me now rather say what you wish."

"What do I wish?"

"Yes, what you wish at the bottom. What you must wish. Or, think you, that I do not know you? Do you think that I have allowed myself to be bewildered with these convulsions in your feelings, by this spectre of a new love which has seized upon your imagination? Child! Child! No one has reposed upon my breast whose innermost soul I have

not penetrated, whose slightest pulsation I have not heard. And to yours have I listened with the ears of sympathy and love—Flora you are deeply, deeply bound to me; not by your letters, your oaths, your love, which you have given to me—but by a mightier bond—by the depth of sympathy, by virtues, nay, even by failings; for even your failings are mine, and I know myself again in you. Fools command people to reform their errors. I have loved yours and adopted them, in order through them to make you happy. Look around you whether you can find such a love! And from this you will turn yourself, mistaking yourself and me! Do you think that your beauty, your talents, fettered me to you?—hundreds possess these in a higher degree than you! No! it is your deeper self; your sublime, eccentric being, wandering and wavering, between heaven and hell! Upon the journey between these poles will I accompany you, you shall accompany me—sharing its perdition or its bliss! At this moment I offer you bliss. Confess yourself; you are no Northern maiden, Flora, and cannot be measured by the temperate life of the north. You are of a southern nature, and require for your bloom a warmer sun. Accompany me therefore to the East, to the magnificent Constantinople, and there—learn to know me rightly. For you know me not yet, Flora! It is a peculiarity of my nature not to open its depths except to a full devotedness—my love burns where

it cannot bless,—and you, yourself, Flora, shall dread me from that moment in which you turn yourself from me. I have used sharp weapons against you, I will use them until the moment in which you—resign yourself captive! But then, too, will you become acquainted with a love stronger than the glow of the East, more beautiful than your own beautiful and burning fancy—trust me! You will recognise yourself again in the hour when you fully return to me—your first, your strongest love; you will find first the fulness of life in my arms. I know you better than you know yourself. For your own sake, I conjure you turn yourself fully to me, throw yourself into these arms which are opened for you, come to this breast and find a heaven—no! *that* is flat—a hell of bliss!"

And St. Orme fell upon his knees before Flora, and extended his arms to her.

She had during these words let her head sink upon her breast. When he had ended, she raised it, and standing up slowly, said with an agitated voice—

"What words! what expressions! I know them again—they wake strings which I thought were broken—but they resound still. Oh! that I could but believe you, and—But in vain!—In this hour, when I am bewitched by your words, I feel, I know that you will only deceive me, that you do not love me, that you merely play a part. O St. Orme, how great would you be! how glorious would you be!

if you were but *honest!* But you fail of this least and this greatest, and with it of all!"

St. Orme sprang up as if struck by an arrow, and a great change passed over him. The so-lately-extended arms were folded upon his breast, the colour paled on his cheek, and with an icy scorn he stepped before Flora and said—

"You can then in this case so much better extend your hand to me, for you cannot indeed, my little Flora, gravely insist upon it that you are what the people call 'an honourable woman!'"

Flora felt this sting as keenly as St. Orme felt that which she gave. Flaming with anger, she exclaimed—

"Yes, too honourable, too good am I in truth to belong to you, mean man! And let happen what may, I never will become your wife!"

"You shall be my wife or nobody's; and you shall go to the grave with a stained reputation. If you will have me for an enemy, I will treat you accordingly."

"Do it! I fear you not, miserable, coward-heart! Thorsten Lennartson will speedily free me from your aspersions. I have seen you grow pale and tremble before him. You shall have experience of a strength which shall tame yours."

At this remembrance, St. Orme's pale cheeks coloured, and he said with a vengeful smile—

"Thorsten Lennartson will desert you when I let

him see certain letters, in particular *one* certain letter —my poor little Flora, you seem to have a short memory, and not at all to remember that letter in which you invited me—"

Flora now interrupted him with a torrent of words and expressions, with which I will not stain my paper. Their principal meaning was, that St. Orme made use of her good faith, of her indiscretion, to blacken her intentions and her conduct; but it was not an innocent woman but a fury who spoke in Flora.

St. Orme heard her with coldness, and when she ceased speaking from exhaustion he said—

"When you have composed yourself, you will see that all this serves you not at all. You have in any case only one course to take, and that is, to go with me to Constantinople as my wife. You have made the way difficult for yourself, but it still stands open to you. Shall I shew it to you?"

Flora made no reply, and St. Orme continued—

"You write to-day to Lennartson and tell him, that on account of a prior engagement—which you had for a moment forgotten—you must renounce the honour of becoming his wife. You know best how you can turn it. And after that, confer your hand on your first, true love, and—he will conduct you as his dearly beloved wife to his beautiful villa near Constantinople."

"Know, St. Orme," interrupted Flora, "know, that if this took place—and something within me at

this moment says that it will take place—then you lead misfortune into your house, your own Nemesis!" With this she stood up, pale, and with outstretched hand and with a fearful expression, she continued—"for I shall hate you, Adrian—I shall so hate you, that you yourself shall be terrified, and shall fear before—your own wife! Yes, laugh now! The time will come when you will not laugh, the time will come when I shall see you—take care of yourself St. Orme, you have awoke in me a horrible thirst. You have given me a desire to be near you, to be your wife, merely to punish you, merely to be revenged on you. There—but, take off yourself!—there, take my hand, take it if you dare, take it, and—with it my eternal hate!"

"I take it and your hatred! It has amused me sometimes to compel indifference—now it gives me pleasure to force hate to change into love. In this respect I follow merely the doctrine of christianity.—Agreed, lovely bride! On Sunday they shall publish the banns for us three times in the church, and eight days afterwards we will celebrate the marriage. But I am charmed with you for the beautiful struggle and the quick resolution. That well deserves a bride-groom's kiss."

With this, he clasped her in his arms, and they kissed;—thus embrace each other the spirits of hell.

With a shudder, with a horrible 'hu!' Flora recovered her consciousness. St. Orme had vanished.

In the same moment Selma stood in the doorway and beckoned me silently to her. I went to her, and she whispered quietly—

"Brenner is here! He wishes to meet with St. Orme, whom he understood to be here. In my anxiety I have told him somewhat of that which has occurred, and have mentioned to him the meeting which I feared between Lennartson and St. Orme. He seems to consider that he has the first right to fight with St. Orme. I have had a deal of trouble to keep him back till the conversation here was ended, and he can hear its result from you. Come now and speak to him; tell us how it is!"

And she led me to Brenner, who was in my step-mother's boudoir. I found him in the most violent temper, and so determined to fight with St. Orme, that it was only with difficulty that I could prevent his doing so, and by telling him what turn the affair had taken, as well as by confessing my uncertainty whether Flora deserved that such men as Brenner and Lennartson should venture life and blood for her. I besought him earnestly at least to keep himself quiet this one day, and await further intelligence. I promised to write to him early in the morning on this subject. With this promise Brenner left us, and I accompanied Selma to Flora.

She paced rapidly up and down the room, talked loud, and seemed not to regard us.

"That is glorious, that is right glorious!" ex-

claimed she; "all is now settled; all choice, all torment over! He has won the game. But do not rejoice, then! Thou hast closed *one* future to me, but thou hast opened to me another. I will—I have a new goal, a new interest in life; and that is, to rack thee, to torment, to punish thee!"

"Flora!" exclaimed Selma, with an indescribable expression of pain and tenderness.

"Yes," continued she, "he shall learn whom he has subjected! Ah, Adrian St. Orme! We shall see! we shall see! Long have I wavered between heaven and the abyss—the abyss has won. Well! I will go to school there; I will be skilful in its arts, more skilful than he. In such things a woman is always more skilful than a man."

"Flora! Flora!" cried Selma again.

"Who calls Flora?" exclaimed she, wildly. "Is it my good angel? then he may know that he calls on me too late. I will listen to him no more. I have now something else to do, and people may curse me or weep over me; it is all the same, and I shall not ask about it. All my feelings and all my thoughts are hatred and revenge. Ah, that I could properly revenge myself!"

She stood still a while, as if she bethought herself, clapped her hands and exclaimed—

"I have it—I have it! He thinks of obtaining wealth with me, but he shall be mistaken. Married to him, I will become a spendthrift, a gambler; I will

in every possible way lavish away money—will accumulate debts—will weave around him a web of trouble and vexation!—Ha! shudder St. Orme! How thou shalt be imposed upon! To have employed so much labour, so much craft, so much eloquence, to have brought into thy house poverty and hatred! Gold and hatred those thou mightst have embraced; but poverty and hatred, when they shall embrace thee! then perhaps we may see this iron brow grow pale, this bold glance become timid—then shalt thou wish to escape, but shalt not be able."

In this manner and in this spirit continued Flora for a long time. Selma had vanished in the mean time. It had become dark; a wild storm raged without, and showers of hail and rain poured clatteringly down. The uproar in nature seemed to allay the uproar in Flora's soul. She became calmer. She stood long in the window, observing the contest without. In a while her tears began to flow. She wept long, and appeared to obtain ease from so doing.

When she had somewhat composed herself, she seated herself at her writing-desk, saying—

"Now I will write to Lennartson, and beseech of him to abstain from all thoughts of me. I shall tell him that I am unworthy of his devotion, his esteem. That is not true; but what matters it? In this way, I shall preserve him from all danger, and—I am now quite indifferent towards myself."

Deeply affected by these words, I exclaimed,

"Wait yet a while, Flora. Let us think; let us consider; some outlet, some help must yet present itself."

"No, there is none;" sighed Flora, with a kind of quiet desperation, "and I am tired of labouring, of struggling against an irresistible destiny. This St. Orme is my dark destiny; I must be his, that I feel. O this Lennartson! so strong and yet so good—he alone could have saved me. Yes, if he could have loved me as I loved him, beyond every thing. But he could not thus love me. And yet I am not altogether unworthy of his love. I have a something in me, which under his protection, by his side, might have developed itself to great beauty. O Lennartson! had I been thine, how different had I, had every thing been. That which thou hast loved should I have loved; and talents, wealth, all the gifts which I possess, and which now will be changed into a curse, would in thy hands have been changed into a blessing. Oh, to stand near such a goal, and see it vanish; to hold in one's hand life's best lot, and to see it snatched away! To be compelled to renounce a Lennartson, in order to be the outcast and despairing prey of a St. Orme! Oh, why do I not die?"

And in a new outbreak of the most violent pain Flora threw herself down upon the floor.

At this moment a bright ray of light broke through the clouds into the room, and it seemed to me as if a

white dove descended in this brightness, and spread its wings over Flora.

It was Selma, who with the lightness of a bird flew into the room, sank on her knees beside Flora, and whilst she threw off a white shawl which covered her head and shoulders, stretched forth her hands and exclaimed—

"No, live; live my Flora! Live, and be happy. There are your letters!"

In her hand was a small bag of crimson silk.

With an exclamation of joy, "My letters! my letters!" Flora threw herself upon them.

"You are free, Flora!" continued Selma, with a voice which seemed to repress the agitation of her mind. "St. Orme resigns you——sets off soon from Stockholm——you are free—be happy, be happy!"

"Selma, what do you say?" exclaimed Flora; "are you, or am I insane? How—what—how have you known?"

With incoherent, zealous questionings both Flora and I surrounded Selma. But she answered nothing; she heard us not. She lay without consciousness on the floor, her hair and her dress wet through with rain.

We carried her to her bed, but our efforts to recal her to consciousness were fruitless. I sent with all speed a messenger to my stepmother, and another also to our family physician, Doctor L. And quickly were both of them beside her bed; my stepmother

with a countenance as pale, almost as death-like, as that of her beloved daughter.

After a vein had been opened, Selma returned to life, but not to consciousness. She was in a sorrowful manner out of herself.

The clear friendly eyes were wild and staring, and seemed as if they would avoid some horrible sight.

She drew me towards her, and said half whispering,

"Do you know, it was horrible! I met him just as I came out of——out of the pit; and he looked at me with such terrible, flaming eyes——"

"Who looked at you so, my sweet Selma?" asked I.

"He——St. Michael——you know. I wished to fly; but he held me back, and marked my forehead with his finger, because I had been with the bad one; and since then it burns within, and I know that I never more can shew myself among people. They all look at me with such terrified looks——you also ——I must look very horrible!"

"You are ill, Selma, and therefore everybody looks so anxiously at you; but you yourself look like a good angel, as you are."

"Yes, you say so; but he indeed knew better; he who saw me there——he would have killed me, would have run his spear into my heart, if I had not fled. Yes, I fled from him; but I felt that it was all over with me; that I was branded, and the whole world fled before me as I fled——"

"You must not talk so much now, Selma, you must try to sleep."

"Sleep?—No, I shall never sleep more. It burns so sadly here!" she laid her hand upon her forehead. "And I see everywhere the looks—— the looks! They will keep me awake till doomsday. No, I can never more sleep!"

Whilst I listened to these horrible phantasies, and sought in vain after their cause, Doctor L. explained them to my stepmother by the words 'a *brain-fever*, a *mild* brain-fever." He said that this disease was very prevalent just now, and mostly made violent attacks without any ostensible cause. We immediately adopted all the remedies which he prescribed, and which are useful in the treatment of such diseases. Selma's head was raised high in bed, and the room was made dark and kept still, and cold applications were used for the burning head. As I was engaged with attending to all this, they came and called me out. In the ante-room I found Lennartson, but so pale, and so agitated, as I had never before seen him.

"Where, where is Selma?" asked he hastily. "What had she to do with St. Orme? Who sent her there?"

"You do not suspect Selma of anything bad or incorrect?" asked I.

"Her? Impossible! But I suspect others. I fear that they misuse her self-sacrificing, affectionate heart."

"How and where did you meet with Selma?"

"I went to seek for St. Orme. A lady wrapped in a white shawl came at that moment out of his room. Some unmannerly young fellows tried to unveil her; I released her from them, and then I saw that she trembled; took her hand, to lead her down, and then I recognised her as—Miss Selma! She tore herself from me, and fled so hastily that I could not say a word to her—could not then accompany her—but now I must know why she was there?"

In as few words as possible, I related to the Baron all that had occurred.

We now saw that Selma, impelled by a sudden impulse to save Flora, and to prevent a meeting between St. Orme and Lennartson, had hastened to the dwelling of the first, defended alone by her enthusiasm and her devoted love. But by what talisman she has been able to induce St. Orme to give up the treasure which he has so long kept with the jealous grasp of the dragon, that is incomprehensible to us.

Deeply struck was Lennartson when he was made acquainted with Selma's present condition. As it was now very late in the evening he was obliged to go. "I shall come again early in the morning," said he. He inquired also after Flora, but seemed scarcely to hear my answer. Oh! it is ever clearer to me which he loves.

The 20th, in the Morning.

Now is the night over, but what a night! Selma has constant delirium. The same fantasies return, although under various forms; and well did I now understand their ground. O my poor, young sister! Towards morning she desired to have myrtle and flowers, and began to weave a garland, which she called Flora's bridal wreath; for some time she kept up zealously, but at times her feeble hands dropped down, and would not complete the work. She sang also scraps of her joyous songs, but she ended none. My poor stepmother went about with speechless anxiety in her eyes, and seemed to ask with them, 'How is it? How will it be?' Flora is gone this morning to her sister, after having sate up with me through the night. I have now written to Brenner, and shall not again leave my Selma's chamber, where I write this.

In the Evening.

All remains the same. Selma continues to weave her garland, but laments that it never will be ready; in the intervals she sings. Doctor L. looks troubled, and talks of cutting off her hair—her beautiful hair! Lennartson has been here several times to inquire after her. They laid in the night straw before the house, to deaden the sound of the wheels. That was Lennartson's attention.

Brenner also has been here, but I did not see him.

The 21st.

Another night of inexpressible disquiet and anguish! Doctor L. does not think that she can live through the day, if a happy crisis do not take place.

In Sweden, they call certain nights at Midsummer *iron nights*, in which a frost spirit appears and breathes over the flower-strewn earth. Often then is killed and destroyed in a few hours the hopes of years. Then is the heaven clear, the air calm; and when the sun ascends, the corn-fields shine with the finest silver attire—but it is the *attire of death;* an icy garment, under whose covering the blooming ears are destroyed.

In human life too occur at times these *iron* nights. Then die the young, the gay, the blooming; happy souls, if they die not only in heart, if they escape being left alone on the earth like the empty ears of the field, without sap and without the power of life. Selma! thou young, thou good one! I can scarcely wish that thou shouldst live—for ever plainer hear I out of thy wanderings, the secret of thy heart, thy silent sufferings. But if thou goest home, how desolate—

Later.

Some change seems to be taking place in Selma; she raves still, but her fantasies assume a more quiet character. She believes now that she shall die, and has called to me several times only to say "when I am

dead, remain in my place with my mother! Love her! She is so good!"

Flora was here only for a moment; she cannot bear to see and hear Selma; and is for the most part with her sister.

In the Evening.

O now one hour of hope! May it not deceive us!

In the afternoon, Selma called to me and said—

"Now I am dead, Sophia! You see plainly that I lie in my grave; and it is good to be there too, if I only find rest, if I only can sleep. Used they to sleep in graves? To sleep and forget—till they awoke with God. I wonder why I cannot sleep like the rest!—ah yes, I know, I know—it is *his* glance! Have you seen him?"

"Seen whom, my sweet Selma?"

"St. Michael! It is his flaming glance, which burnt me, which keeps me awake in the grave. But I know likewise, that when I can once see him in the light, above the clouds, then will he regard me quite otherwise. I know that all here which is bad, happens only because it is so dark upon earth; that one cannot see all as it is in its truth."

A sudden thought with this occurred to me, and whilst I endeavoured to chime in with her ideas, I said that I had seen him of whom she spoke; he had no suspicion of her, but would gladly look in light and love upon her.

"If I could believe that," said Selma, with a look of melancholy joy, "then I should be easier. If he will let a look of blessing fall upon my grave, then it would press through the earth, and down into my coffin, and the torments would then cease, and I should be able to slumber in peace. But tell nobody in the world," continued she vehemently, "tell nobody that I have loved him. Say to everybody, 'she has loved no one, excepting her father, her mother, her friend Flora, and her sister Sophia.' And do not tell Flora that Selma died for her!—Tell her that I was stung by a snake, and of that I became ill, mortally ill."

Whilst Selma talked thus with loud ringing voice, and fever burning upon her cheeks, a light movement took place in the chamber; and as I looked in its direction, I perceived Lennartson and Flora standing behind Selma's bed's-head. They seemed to have heard all; he held his hands pressed against his breast, and seemed to breathe with difficulty. According to the prescription of the physician, Selma was raised high in the bed, in a half-sitting posture, her beautiful hair fell down in waves; over her head she had thrown the half-finished garland, which she had bound for Flora; it was the beloved prey which the dark ravager approached to embrace; it was the sylph, who had lost her wings, but now stiffening in death, could not lose her beauty.

Dark fancies seemed again to ascend in her.

"No, no!" exclaimed she, with supplicating, outstretched hands, "thrust me not down into this dark depth! I desire nothing base! Help, Lennartson!"

And in the same moment Lennartson stood before her, clasped her extended hands between his, and said with an indescribable expression of love—

"What fears Selma? Lennartson is here. In life and in death will he defend thee! Look at me, Selma, and trust in me!"

She looked at him at first with a timid, astonished glance; but this soon changed itself through the powers which proceeded from Lennartson's glorious, beaming eyes. He seated himself on the edge of her bed, and continued to look at her quietly and stedfastly; and, wonderful! during this gaze, the excitement passed away from hers, and the loving and clear expression returned. She spoke no word, but it was as if her being's hitherto unexpressed, fettered harmony now poured itself forth in silent streams, and united them and made them happy. Over the countenance of the poor invalid, the expression of unspeakable peace diffused itself more and more, the weary eyelids sank, and she softly slept. Long sate Lennartson still, with his gaze fixed upon the slumberous countenance; but my stepmother's mute signs compelled him at length to remove himself. Silently extended she her arms to him; he clasped her in his, leaned himself upon her shoulder, and deep sighs laboured forth from his breast.

Flora had vanished, but none of us had observed when she went.

All is still; so still in the house; they know that the beloved daughter of the house sleeps an important sleep. The philosopher looks gloomy in the highest degree. He said to me yesterday in his unearthly voice, "If Miss Selma dies, then it is not worth while to live." Then is the sunshine gone from the world.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON:
Printed by Manning and Mason, Ivy Lane, St. Paul's.

00075742

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016